

ADMINISTRATION SUPERVISION AND CONSULTATION

Papers from the
1954 Social Welfare Forum
National Conference of Social Work

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Contents

	Page
The Application of Business Techniques to the Administration of Social Agencies	5
<i>Albert H. Aronson</i>	
Group Training Methods in Public Assistance Agencies.	18
<i>Corinne H. Wolfe</i>	
Criteria for Determining Readiness of Staff to Function Without Supervision	34
<i>Charlotte S. Henry</i>	
Control and Freedom in the Caseworker's Growth	46
<i>Emmy Aufricht</i>	
Integration of the Teaching and Administrative Aspects of Supervision	51
<i>Jeanette Hanford</i>	
Current and Future Trends in Recording	59
<i>Bernice Bish</i>	
Are We Geared for the Development of Leaders in Social Work?	69
<i>Sophia M. Robison</i>	
Board Membership: Inventory and Opportunity	81
<i>Clarice H. L. Pennock</i>	
The Role of the Management Consultant in the Social Work Field	92
<i>Albert Pleydell</i>	
Consultation: Some Guiding Principles	98
<i>Doris Siegel</i>	

Contributors

ALBERT H. ARONSON, Chief, Division of State Merit Systems, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

CORINNE H. WOLFE, Chief, Division of Technical Training, Bureau of Public Assistance, Social Security Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

CHARLOTTE S. HENRY, District Director, Garfield District, Family Service Association, Cleveland, Ohio

EMMY AUFRICHT, Caseworker, Inwood House, New York, New York

JEANETTE HANFORD, Director, Family Service Bureau, United Charities, Chicago, Illinois

BERNICE BISH, Executive Director, Family Service, Kansas City, Missouri

SOPHIA M. ROBISON, Professor Emeritus, New York School of Social Work, Columbia University; and Visiting Professor, Adelphi College School of Social Work, Garden City, New York, and Yeshiva University School of Education and Community Administration, New York, New York

CLARICE H. L. PENNOCK, Director of Field Work in the Social Sciences, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York; and former Chairman, Advisory Committee on Citizen Participation of Community Chests and Councils of America and the National Social Welfare Assembly

ALBERT PLEYDELL, Management Consultant, Albert Pleydell Associates, New York, New York

DORIS SIEGEL, Director, Social Service Department, Mount Sinai Hospital, New York, New York

Preface

The Editorial Committee of the 1954 National Conference of Social Work selected this group of papers on administration, supervision, and consultation from the 1954 Annual Forum and recommended that they be published in a single volume. The Conference is pleased that it was able to make arrangements with the Publications Service of the Family Service Association of America to carry out the recommendation.

The publication activities of the Conference have increased substantially in the last few years. In 1954 the Conference arranged to publish, not only the official Proceedings, *The Social Welfare Forum*, but also three supplementary volumes: *Group Work and Community Organization, 1953-54*; *Casework Papers, 1954*; and *Administration, Supervision, and Consultation*. The Proceedings and the first supplementary volume are to be published by Columbia University Press and the two latter titles by the Family Service Association of America.

The members of the 1954 Editorial Committee of the Conference, who took responsibility for selection of the papers included in this volume, are: Mildred Frank, Washington, D.C., chairman; Irving Weissman, New Orleans; Lois Corke, New York. Neither the Editorial Committee nor the Conference itself officially endorses the points of view expressed in these articles. The group of papers should be regarded as a symposium in which the expression of divergent opinions is encouraged.

This particular volume, in the opinion of the Editorial Committee, has the special value of making available material on three subjects which frequently are viewed in isolation from each other but which actually are closely related. It is the hope of the Edito-

PREFACE

rial Committee that these papers will help to show the interrelationships of administrative and educational processes and to reduce some of the current confusions about the respective place of each function in social agency operations.

On behalf of the Conference, I should like to express appreciation to the Family Service Association of America for acting as publisher of this set of papers.

JOE R. HOFFER

*National Conference of Social Work
Columbus, Ohio*

October 1, 1954

THE APPLICATION OF BUSINESS TECHNIQUES TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIAL AGENCIES

Albert H. Aronson

SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION is big business. Public aid payments, exclusive of the social insurances, run well over two billion dollars annually in this country. Related public health and welfare services run into several billions, the exact amount depending upon the definition of such services. Total private gifts and bequests to social work were estimated as about \$1,500,000,000 in 1951 and presumably have increased since. Regardless of the exact figures, it is clear that the sums involved are of such magnitude, and the expenditures for administration so large, that there is significance to the inquiry as to whether the most efficient means of administration are being used.

The productive miracles of our economy are due to the scope given to individual inventiveness and initiative; to our heritage of freedom of inquiry and the recognition and support of scientific research, basic and applied; to democratic education and the opportunity for managerial and technical talent to rise above caste limitations prevalent in many societies; to the application of management planning in organization and work methods; to the mobility of our developing economy and the willingness to supplant outmoded machines, methods, and ideas in the interest of increased productivity; to the acknowledgment and fostering of the demand for an ever higher standard of living, and the participation of the masses of the people in the benefits of increased productivity.

The social problems that the development of our industrial economy has brought about are outside the scope of this discussion,

but we should examine the extent to which the practices of business enterprise can contribute to social enterprise. I assume that the selection of the title assigned for this paper was not based on a naive assumption that all business methods are desirable or even efficient. Rather, it is a recognition that the best-run businesses have techniques that may have applicability to social agencies. I shall confine my discussion to methods of administration, excluding the questions of setting social policy and goals, of program planning and research, and of evaluation of the social effects of the agency program.

Business techniques are, of course, currently applied extensively in both public and private social agencies. They may or may not always be the best current techniques, nor are they necessarily given the scope that would permit their most effective application. One book on administration of a social agency discusses "business methods" under "office management."

Administration in a social agency involves blending knowledge of professional and administrative planning and techniques with skill in human relations. The questions of policy which an administrator must decide require knowledge on his part of both social forces and professional practices in the field. Professional groups are quick to recognize and defend the professional component in administration. Thus, traditionally, doctors have administered hospitals. The development of the lay hospital administrator, who is a professional administrator rather than a professional medical man, is still not fully accepted by all segments of the medical profession. Social workers have recognized that the head of a social agency without social vision and without knowledge of social work practices is severely handicapped. Striving for professional standards, they have labeled the administrator who is not a professional social worker as "untrained," but have not applied the term to the professional social worker who is comparably unequipped in administration. There has not been as much recognition in social work as there has been in industry that administrative leadership involves more than a high level and degree of specialized business or professional knowledge and experience.

The essential elements of administration may be considered to embrace planning, organization and methods, direction and co-

ordination, budget and fiscal management, public relations, personnel administration, training and supervision. Planning must include both program planning and administrative planning.

Planning, Organization, and Co-ordination

Administrative planning consists in setting goals to accomplish already determined program objectives and bringing to bear the resources of the organization to achieve these goals. Such planning involves both the long-range view and the appraisal of situations immediately ahead. Necessary flexibility in changing plans to meet changing conditions does not obviate the necessity for planning; rather it makes desirable the delineation of alternative plans to meet probable contingencies. At any given time, however, there must be a defining of what is expected in performance by organization units during limited time periods. The redetermination of priorities and the evaluation of results are aspects of the continuous process. One large company has a twelve-month plan revised every three months.

Organization, in terms of the administrative structure of an agency, has long occupied the attention of those interested in management practices and theory. The effective operation of an organization requires the logical grouping of activities and the clarification of relationships by defining unit and job functions. Vaguely defined jobs in a vaguely defined or actually superseded structure bring problems of gaps and overlaps in responsibility and authority. A related contribution of traditional management planning has been the recognition that the span of control, of the effective range of managerial direction and supervision, is limited. Organization and functional charts and job descriptions are tools of administrative planning in these areas.

Current trends in organizational planning have modified and enlarged the traditional concepts. There has been a recognition that, in addition to the formal, official organizational structure, there is an informal one that must be taken into account. Channels of communication, consultation, co-ordination, and influence do not necessarily follow lines on the organization chart. They are nonetheless important in administration and do not disappear either by being ignored or by administrative fiat.

A traditional concept is that the number of persons reporting to an executive must be sharply controlled to avoid bottlenecking or executive abdication. Some management students have even justified a specific limitation to a figure between three and seven, on the ground that the number of relationships the executive must take into account increases geometrically with the number of persons directly supervised. Modern business is increasingly recognizing that too narrow a span of control has definite disadvantages: over-supervision, and an increase in the number of levels of supervision, with problems of communication and status for those isolated from top management.

Some leading companies, Sears, Roebuck, for example, have deliberately broadened their span of control beyond the numbers traditionally regarded as sound. This has been done for two reasons: to force executives to delegate a degree of responsibility and to shorten the vertical chain of command. It has proved an effective device for better utilization of subordinates, for speedy action and effective communication, and for the promotion of initiative and morale.

Modern organizational planning, then, does not proceed on a mere theoretical concept of the span of control but on a realistic analysis of the particular organization and the type of functions involved at each level, balancing the psychological factors and the feasibility of guidance and control. The organizational structure must be such as to facilitate two-way communication and maximum delegation, at the same time that there are clarification of duties, responsibilities, and authority, and a span of control that permits effective direction and evaluation of performance.

We have touched on some of the problems of direction and coordination in terms of delegation of maximum responsibility and authority throughout the organization. In social work there is a special aspect of this problem of delegation in the relationship between a board and an executive. The relationship must be such as to permit unitary and decisive action in administration. Proper delegation is not merely a matter of stating that the board deals with policy and the executive with administration. It is a matter of clarifying what policy is and what administration is in a given field, and of adjusting practice to conform to the principle.

Effective direction depends upon effective controls. By this I mean not domination but the channeling of forces. Effective controls imply the ability of the executive to offer constructive guidance at critical points. This necessitates knowledge, in relatively objective terms, of how the organization performs. Do employees and supervisors have a common agreement as to the elements of the job and what constitutes adequate or superior performance? Have workload standards been developed for various types of work? How meaningful are reports and statistics relating to specific aspects of the program as a measure of accomplishment and means of control?

Co-ordination is achieved in various ways, including the definition of responsibilities, the proper use of committees, clearance procedures, joint participation in planning and decisions, and effective communications. Such co-ordination must not be achieved at the expense of swift and definitive action.

Methods and Procedures

The area of simplified methods and procedures needs to be explored by a social agency as well as a business organization. Here, the contribution of industrial engineering techniques is considerable. Two examples may be noted. Process charts are useful in showing the flow of work, the bottlenecks where materials are held awaiting action, the forwarding and backtracking of papers, as well as the actual operations involved when action is taken. A forms control system has a number of values. It will provide for the use of forms instead of individual memoranda and letters as a means of cutting down dictation and typing. A recent survey of 120 companies sending out 70,000 letters a month using dictaphone and typing pools indicated that letters cost over one dollar apiece. Yet a phone call could have taken the place of some of these letters, and forms could have served in place of many others. A forms control system provides for the design and simplification of forms. It should minimize the number of forms involved, and permit their most effective use for coding and compilation of statistical and other data.

A social agency needs to examine its process of case recording. To what extent is it a necessary step for orderly handling of cases, a necessary record, and a necessary basis for supervision? To what

extent is it merely a ritual that has become an accepted part of the casework process, to the point that it would be sacrilegious to question it? Many agencies are critically examining both the format and the process of recording. Older patterns of narrative and process recording are giving way, particularly in large programs such as public assistance, to experiments with form recording. More effective methods of dictating and transcribing are being introduced. The time and expense involved in case recording and reading cases are such that every agency has a responsibility for an objective examination of the needs and use of case records in the particular agency setting.

Business is giving increased attention not only to limiting the production of records but to their disposition and other phases of records management. It has been estimated that it costs two hundred dollars a year to maintain a standard four-drawer file. What do we need copies of, and for how long? Is microfilming desirable? Is there a plan for systematic disposal of unnecessary records?

Budget and Fiscal Management

In comparing administrative costs, a yardstick sometimes applied to agencies is the percentage relationship between these costs and the total cost of assistance payments. However, a comparison among jurisdictions on a percentage basis is not always valid as a means of establishing whether administrative costs in a specific agency are relatively high or low. Measuring administrative overhead costs as a percentage of the gross volume of business done is appropriate in many businesses. In a social agency a large part of staff effort and of administrative costs is related to the volume of business that the agency has not done, if business done means an expenditure for assistance. There is a proper administrative cost when, as a result of careful investigation, an application for assistance is rejected as ineligible. Similarly, there is an administrative cost when assistance payments are discontinued because the social worker helped the family to develop a resource or to obtain employment. The percentage relationship between administrative cost and assistance is also affected by the differences among agencies in the size of the average assistance payments. Whether the amount granted is thirty dollars or sixty dollars, the cost of investigation may be the same.

Yet the percentage that the salary of the welfare worker comprises of the assistance expenditures for the same number of cases would be twice as high in one instance as in the other.

Cost analysis is essential to business operations, although its refinements are still in the process of development. Meaningful analysis is designed to give costs not merely by organizational unit or by type of expenditure, as in a typical budget, but in terms of specific end results. The cost of different types of operations and services can then be related to the volume of work. At the 1953 National Conference of Social Work, John G. Hill and Ralph Ormsby described an experiment in the application of this business technique to a social agency.¹ This recognized the special considerations that must be taken into account to make the process fruitful in a social agency. The extension of cost analysis studies by social agencies should provide a useful perspective on agency operations and processes, and should lead to more informed decisions as to the most effective and economical use of always too-limited resources. The budget should be regarded as a planning instrument and not merely as a negative fiscal control.

In certain areas we can learn from business not to be penny-wise and pound-foolish. Adequate compensation, particularly for executives, is regarded in industry as good business practice, not extravagance. No progressive business would, in hiring responsible employees comparable to caseworkers, make possession of a car a primary requisite. Yet some social work agencies are barring themselves from obtaining able young workers by this requirement. The payment of adequate travel expenses is another area in which business practice is generally superior to that of both public and private agencies. I am not referring to lush practices, where a liberal expense account, as a non-taxable business expense, is used as a form of compensation, but rather to realism in meeting reasonable expenses.

The use of the most modern and efficient, rather than outmoded, office machines and equipment, and the recognition that productivity is affected by space and other working conditions, are other aspects of better business practice which are not always fully recognized in social agency administration.

¹ "The Philadelphia Time-Cost Study in Family Service," *The Social Welfare Forum*, 1953, Columbia University Press, New York, 1953, p. 205.

Public Relations

The public relations function is that of getting understanding and co-operation from the various publics with which the agency is concerned. It is certainly not merely publicity. The day-to-day contacts of employees with the public on the telephone, face to face, and in correspondence, are important forces making for good or ill will. A sound and efficient program will, in the long run, sell itself by results. Yet, we cannot ignore either the importance of a well-informed staff and of courtesy and promptness in gaining public confidence and recognition of achievements, or the importance of a planned information program.

A public relations program includes reporting to the various publics concerned—professional groups, civic organizations, interested educational institutions—as well as to the agency's clientele and the more numerous and nebulous general public. There is no simple, single effort that can meet all needs. Each of these groups should be provided with appropriate information of sufficient interest actually to gain attention. Many leading industrial companies today make some reports directed to employees. Whether one considers this as part of the public relations program or as part of an employee relations program does not matter. The importance of having all employees informed on program objectives and developments is the core of this approach.

Although the social agency does not have a product to sell, it can well consider the implications of the attention given by business to advertising, not only directly to stimulate specific product demand, but to create good will. At the same time, it must be noted that businessmen are now asking questions about their advertising: who reads it and what is its effect? The same questions must be asked about publicity and informational materials prepared by an agency.

In the area of public relations there is a sharp contrast between social agencies and business which may be summed up as a contrast between the use of jargon and the use of slogans. There is a tendency in social work, as in other professions, to use a specialized idiom, which may be unintelligible to the public. Sometimes this is accepted as a professional mystique; sometimes it is misconstrued. On the other hand, business advertising has an emphasis on "phrases

that sell." I am not advocating the huckster approach. But there should, at the least, be an effort to avoid interposing barriers of words between the social agency and its publics.

Communication and Supervision

Intra-organizational communication has recently been recognized by industry as a matter of major administrative concern. The problems and misunderstandings that arise from the failure to have a two-way flow of information are apparent in many organizations that give lip service to the concept. Such free flow does not just happen. It is a matter of planned organization and policy, coupled with supervisory training and the identification and removal of road blocks. This is an area to which many social agencies have given attention so far as the professional staff is concerned. Oftentimes the same attention is not paid to communication so far as the non-professional staff is concerned. In fact, the professional staff conference as one technique of communication may be carried to the point where it is used for therapeutic self-expression rather than as an administrative tool. The cost of the purchase of a conference table may be weighed more carefully than the cost of numerous conferences which, in terms of the man hours consumed of high salaried staff, may be much more costly than the table. The conference is, of course, only one of the means of effective communication. The whole administrative process is involved, including the use of written instructions and manuals, informational bulletins, periodic reports, bulletin boards, house organs, and the day-to-day processes of co-ordination, clearance, and supervision.

Business and government are learning the importance of front-line supervision in promoting productivity and high morale. The responses in a research study in industry to the question "What does your boss do when you make a mistake?" epitomize this. Employees of low production units tended to say, "He bawls me out," while those in high production units were more likely to say, "He tells me how he wants it done." Improving supervision is not as simple as exemplifying these attitudes. It involves proper selection on the basis of ability and emotional stability, motivation by leadership and training.

Personnel Administration and Training

Business has learned that modern personnel management pays off. The components of such personnel management include systematic classification of jobs as an administrative tool, a planned pay policy that facilitates obtaining and retaining needed abilities and skills, vigorous recruitment activities, use of scientific methods in selection and placement, giving workers the maximum security consonant with economic realities, development of programs of employee health and safety, planned training and executive development programs, periodic evaluations of performance and workable procedures for the discharge of workers on the basis of performance, systematic evaluation of employee attitudes, and use of suggestion plans and incentive awards. Keeping abreast of personnel research in these fields, both in research institutions and in public and industrial organizations, is essential to a progressive program.

Personnel administration is the application of psychological and management techniques to promote the efficient use of employee abilities in congenial and purposeful teamwork. The new look in industrial personnel work emphasizes both the use of scientific techniques in evaluating individual abilities and the human relations aspects of motivating supervisors and employees toward job satisfaction and higher productivity. This implies full recognition of the dignity of the employee as an individual and his desire to use his highest skills, to develop his capacities, and to gain recognition for his contribution to the organization. Personnel administration must establish a physical and psychological environment that promotes efficiency as a corollary. It must develop policies that ensure fairness in decisions affecting the employee.

The research of the psychologist, particularly the psychometrician, has built up growing bodies of evidence concerning the range of individual differences in abilities and ways of measuring them with greater validity. Broadly speaking, the qualities for occupational success may be placed in three main categories: general mental abilities, occupational knowledge and skills, and personal attributes relating to the emotional maturity and social effectiveness of the individual. In the first two of these areas, considerable progress has been made in developing valid techniques for measurement of individual differences. Objective tests have been developed to measure

general intelligence, professional knowledges, and intellectual judgment in applying principles to specific situations. These are measurements of what an individual can do, not what he will do. In the field of personality evaluation, techniques have not been developed to the point of attaining the same degree of objectivity and validity. The interview is still the principal method of hiring in industry and, in the form of the oral examination, is used in the public social services. Considerable research is going on in personality evaluation, and refinement of the interview and the oral examination, and various projective techniques hold promise of improvement and validation. Civil service systems are using objective examinations to test mental abilities and knowledges and are improving their methods of investigating and appraising personal attributes. The use of tests in industry is growing. Executive placement firms in industry are tending to use both tests of mental abilities and certain projective techniques to evaluate personality in executive selection. These are used as aids to judgment rather than as the basis of ranking and selection.

In public service the problems of systematic selection and tenure loom larger than in industry. A public selection system must be an efficient means of identifying ability, and, at the same time, it must recognize the principle of open competition, founded upon the right of the citizen in a democracy to be considered for public employment on the basis of his qualifications.

The larger businesses have long had policies of vigorous recruitment of talent emerging from the colleges. Promotions from within and stability of top staff are other features of large business organizations. A survey by *Fortune* of the 900 top executives in the 250 largest industrial corporations, the 25 largest railroads, and the 25 largest utilities indicated that the typical top executive was a college graduate hired in his twenties after service with one other company, who now, at an age between 50 and 60, had served in his present company for 30 years.

It must be noted that the success of a promotional policy is dependent upon having a large pool of potential executives and upon their careful development and selection. Promotion from within can be stultifying if it is a selection from among mediocrity and largely on the basis of seniority.

Social agencies, public and private, are giving increasing attention to more effective personnel administration. Current professional efforts to stimulate recruitment to the field and bring in a fair share of talent are in the right direction. There are difficulties in recruitment as there are in the application of the better techniques of selection, promotion, discipline, evaluation, and the establishment of a sound pay policy. In the public welfare field, federal-state co-operation has been a significant factor in progress, both through official channels and through the American Public Welfare Association. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Division of State Merit Systems furnishes technical assistance on personnel administration to state personnel agencies and to public welfare, health, and employment security agencies. The National Social Welfare Assembly's Committee on Personnel has brought the national private agencies together in important joint efforts.

Graduate professional education, obviously of vital importance in staff development, is outside the scope of our topic. In-service training programs of various kinds are analogous to those in business. Orientation or vestibule training for all employees, technical training courses of various types, special arrangements with educational institutions, and the payment of tuition for college courses and special management institutes are among current business practices. In the area of executive development, planned job rotation, company subscriptions to magazines, and membership in professional societies are other practices of progressive industry which are of interest.

Management Analysis and Services

A great deal of work in other areas of improved administrative management is presently being conducted by social agencies, public and private. In the public welfare field, the impetus for this has come from those engaged in the programs at various levels of government, as well as from legislative bodies and the general public concerned with the costs of administration and assistance.

The public assistance field is an example of these developments. A number of state public welfare departments have established special units for management analysis. Some agencies assign aspects of management analysis to policy and procedural units, field super-

visory units, or administrative review staff. There has also been use of management consultant firms to conduct surveys where an outside viewpoint is felt to be desirable or additional special skills are needed.

The Bureau of Public Assistance, through its Division of State Administrative and Fiscal Standards, provides management services of broad scope. It develops administrative and fiscal policies and recommendations and illustrative materials for distribution to state agencies. It undertakes procedural studies; for example, one of administrative and fiscal processes in a large Old-Age Assistance program. Another type of consultation deals with the organization and functions of the agencies and of special units; for example, analysis of the case decision processes at various levels in state and local structures. Other consultation has dealt with such subjects as streamlining a manual of instructions, establishment of work standards, and revision of state administrative review of local operations.

Purpose and Technique

A word of caution should be given about the application of business methods in a social agency. All the techniques that we have been discussing must be related to the agency program objectives, which, of course, differ from those of an organization whose criterion of success is profit, rather than service. To illustrate, a management firm making a survey of a public welfare agency concluded that it was not profitable [sic] to process grants of less than five dollars since it cost more than this to handle a case. Yet the alternatives would be illegal and socially unacceptable. Giving every applicant five dollars in order to save administrative costs, even if legalized, would be wasteful and demoralizing. Cutting off grants to a person in need of a small amount, likewise contrary to the law in the jurisdiction, would run counter to the objectives of the program and to sound social policy.

The preoccupation with means and techniques is short-sighted and dangerous. The preoccupation with goals, divorced from methods, may be visionary and impracticable. The task of administration is to keep objectives in mind and to keep methods in perspective. Without the motivation of high purpose, procedures are pointless; without efficiency of management, motivation is motionless.

GROUP TRAINING METHODS IN PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AGENCIES

Corinne H. Wolfe

DURING THE PAST twenty years public assistance administrators, staff development consultants, program and line supervisory staff have been engaged in administering a large and complex program and, at the same time, training and developing staff to carry out the program. Beginning in 1933, with the mass relief programs of the depression, most state agencies have developed staff training programs as an integral part of their administration.

For the most part, public assistance agencies have had to employ untrained personnel and training has had to be provided by agency staff supervisors or by various types of supplemental training programs both within the agency and from without. Training in public assistance agencies has not been concerned with training of caseworkers only but has included all levels of staff engaged in the administration of the program.

In this paper, discussion of training in groups will be limited to use of the group method in orientation of staff, supervision of caseworkers, and supervision of county directors or case supervisors. There will be no attempt to discuss principles of supervision per se, but only to discuss concepts that seem to be emerging in the use of group methods in training of staff.¹

¹ Information used in this paper is based on material supplied by state public assistance agencies in response to a request for information on use of groups in training of staff or from state materials available in the Bureau of Public Assistance of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

When, after the enactment of social security legislation in 1935, state welfare agencies began to administer the public assistance programs, supervisors tended to operate in the traditional way of teaching through individual supervision and through review of case records. As case loads increased and personnel turnover became a serious problem, some agencies began to use the group method—for example, staff meetings, institutes, and study sessions—as a time-saving device. Usually staff meetings were used to give out information regarding agency rules and regulations and to discuss general subject areas. Group conferences, which were often lectures with a question and answer period, were used to present such subjects as child care, the crippled children program, and the explanation of the new public health program. The information, although relevant, was often given in such a way as to seem remote from the day-to-day task.

Supervisors and administrators realized that there was need for organized and planful training of staff. Beginning in 1936, the Bureau of Public Assistance, through its Division of Technical Training, spent considerable time in work with state agencies in encouraging administrators to develop plans of training, in experimenting in training methods, and in strengthening supervisory personnel. As a result, during the period of 1936 to 1941, principles of staff development emerged which have affected the methods and content of training of staff in public assistance agencies today. These principles have been stated as follows:

1. The program of staff development is recognized as an integral part of administration and as a means of strengthening administration through improving competence of staff.
2. All members of the agency's staff should be included in the program of staff development.
3. The program should be planned specifically to meet needs of staff in relation to the work expected of each employee toward achievement of the agency purposes.
4. Because of the dynamic nature of public welfare and of workers' potentialities, it is expected that development of staff will be considered as a continuing process.
5. Staff members competent to plan and to give direction to necessary content and method should be provided for the program.

These principles are based on the premise that the development and maintenance of staff development programs are a proper part of the administration of state public assistance agencies and are necessary to the achievement of their ultimate objectives. Such an undertaking is in no way considered to be a substitute for the selection of competent personnel but, rather, it is assumed that every effort has been made to secure workers well qualified for the agency's work. When this has been done, any staff, regardless of its level of competence, will profit from planned training opportunities.²

Gradually, over the years, state agencies have developed more effective administration, and training of staff has become a part of this administration. Agency staff development consultants, working with program and line supervisors, have come a long way in identifying and clarifying methods of administration and supervision which will enable the agency to further its program.

The following definition of supervision seems to express the present basis for training of staff. This definition, or a variation of it, is found in various state materials. "Supervision is administrative leadership—a leadership which aims to develop the individual staff member's skill and knowledge and to direct activities of the staff in such a way as to bring about improvement in the agency services given to the client." An agency's training program, therefore, should cover all aspects of the staff member's work, not only casework but work organization, community interpretation, use of community resources, and so on.

Group training methods, as they exist in most of the public assistance agencies, were developed as a time-saving device, to teach certain areas of knowledge, policy, and so on. Supervision is the basic core of agency staff development programs. Group supervision and individual supervision are both used and each has its appropriate place in the supervisory plan of an agency.

Emerging Concepts of Staff Training

The experience of various agencies in using group methods in training of staff indicates that some common educational concepts

² "Staff Development Programs in Public Assistance Agencies," Bureau of Public Assistance, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., mimeographed statement, March 14, 1941.

are emerging. Some of the concepts are applicable to both group and individual training. Eight of these concepts will be presented and discussed.

1. *A basic concept, which underlies all others, is that the content of a staff development program must be related to the goals and objectives of the agency and based on the specific knowledge and skill needed by each staff member to carry out the purpose of the program.* An agency, therefore, must define clearly and specifically the service of the agency, thus making it possible for staff members to understand what is expected of them as agency employees. Many agencies have developed some type of job description and standards of performance describing the specifics of the job and the quality level expected of staff in providing services. In public assistance agencies, as in other casework agencies, supervisors are struggling with ways of measuring performance of staff and how to relate training to the identifiable needs of staff.

This concept—that is, of knowing what the job is and of developing training around knowledge and skill needed to do the job—has made it possible to plan supervision, both individual and on a group basis, in such a way that it is closely related to the day-by-day job. The objective in group training is to make clear the relationship of the content being presented—whether new policy, a case problem, or social aspects of illness—to the next day's work, and to show how this information may be used in providing agency service more effectively. All training, whether through staff meetings or through group or individual supervision, is truly effective only when its planning is closely related to the day-by-day work and when practical problems are attacked and some course of action is determined or new skills are learned and applied.

2. *All group meetings have an educational potential.* As agency training specialists have analyzed and evaluated training content and developed ways in which content could be introduced as needed on the job, it has become clear that all group meetings—in addition to groups set up as special training sessions—have an educational potential. Almost all meetings, regardless of their primary purpose, contain some elements of training. As regular agency procedure, all meetings should serve as a means of enlisting group participation in planning and in executing the agency program and also as a

means for staff development. The way in which any meeting or conference is conducted and the degree of participation of all members determine its value.

Creative leadership is of paramount importance in assuring that meetings are profitable and fulfil their purpose. Both leaders and participants must learn and understand how to work successfully in a group. The use of a group method implies that all staff members—from the newest caseworker on the staff to the supervisor and the executive of the agency—have a common goal and are working toward accomplishing the agency purpose. There are, of course, essential techniques for leadership and for staff participation in the group method which agency personnel must learn. Indeed, all staff members need to be trained to work in groups; some of us who have known only individual case supervision need to be oriented to group principles so that we may know when and how they may be applied in the day-by-day administration of a social agency—whether in training, supervision, or administration of the program.

3. *Training meetings are not only a means of teaching knowledge or skill, but are also an important part of administration.* The amount of knowledge content that must be taught is dependent on many factors; every agency, however, has a need for a continuing educational program in order to assure that quality of agency service is maintained and improved. Often this type of on-going training is best achieved through group sessions, where the staff members share their knowledge and experience, or where consultants contribute special knowledge and skill.

The use of group processes in administration and supervision is tending to emphasize the fact that on-going training is needed in many aspects of the agency program. Objectives of agency supervisory staff meetings have been described by training consultants:

a. To secure the interchange of thought between staff members on subjects or problems of common concern under leadership which seeks to stimulate, guide, and develop staff attitudes, abilities, and potential strengths in the planning and execution of agency work.

b. To evolve through the group process working concepts and practical means of making the day-by-day performance of individuals achieve an increasingly higher quality of service in administering services to a community under the existing laws, rules, and regulations.

c. To use the ideas and plans thus evolved in pointing the way to necessary changes or modifications of policy or procedure in order to serve more adequately the people for whom the agency was established.

d. Thus to afford a growing point of view, a perspective, and a clarification for staff members as they relate their own work to that of other staff members and of the agency as a whole.³

4. *Staff members have responsibility to participate in meetings to assure a profitable learning situation for themselves or to discharge their administrative responsibilities.* If one of the aims of agency meetings is to relate content to the day-by-day job, then staff cannot participate on a "take it or leave it" basis. Staff members who plan the meetings, therefore, have real responsibility to see that all meetings have a definite relationship to agency business. In fact, the effectiveness of the administration may be questioned if staff members attach little importance to participation in staff meetings.

5. *Certain content traditionally taught in individual conferences can equally well be taught in a group.* In fact, the interplay between persons in a group appears to speed up the learning process. The presentation of material to a group, instead of individually, conserves agency time; in addition, the discussion of it provides the participants with an opportunity to share their knowledge and experience as well as to test out new ideas and application of theory to the cases currently under care or to the policy being formulated. In orientation sessions, where the primary concern is a teaching-learning one, we have found that the use of the group process stimulates learning. Because each member finds that he is not the only one who lacks knowledge, or whose preconceived ideas need to be revised, he gains security and confidence. As the leader makes it clear that it is permissible for members to have differences of opinion or to admit to ignorance, the members become free to express their feelings and to move forward in the learning process. We are beginning to understand that none of us, despite our titles, education, or experience, can work alone and that group consideration of a problem or of a subject area always widens one's knowledge and vision and contributes to soundness of decisions.

³ *Supervision as an Administrative Process Contributing to Staff Development*, Division of Technical Training, Bureau of Public Assistance, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., November, 1940, p. 22.

6. *The supervisory component is always present in group training sessions and must be understood and dealt with.* The response of the group is conditioned by many factors, important among which is the group's acceptance of the individual conducting the meeting. Often this individual is the immediate supervisor of the members or, in any case, is a representative of the administrative staff. Whether the supervisor leads the group or is a participant, the supervisory component is present. What is discussed in the group meeting cannot be isolated from what is discussed by the supervisor in individual conferences. Both the person in authority and the staff members are aware of the supervisory element. This element can produce either positive or negative reactions in the group, since each member has a particular relationship with his supervisor. The supervisor should recognize these various reactions and must learn to deal with them in working with the group.

If a group is being led by a training or other special consultant, or by an outside expert, such leaders should be aware of the need to relate general content to the specific agency goals. The participants should test the content against their actual practice, as part of the group process.

7. *The use of group method in training has validated the concept of the "two-way process" as a part of administration and supervision.* The discussion method in teaching provides a way to help staff integrate knowledge and thus make it available for day-to-day work. To help workers integrate knowledge and develop skill is an important aspect of both group and individual training. The exchange of ideas among caseworkers and supervisors and administrators helps the total staff see the common goal of the agency and the responsibility each person has for improvement of agency service.

Group training methods have made it possible to accelerate intellectual learning and to help staff members integrate the various aspects of learning—the emotional as well as the intellectual. Educational devices, such as role playing, can help a group develop some emotional involvement in the learning process and can give each member an opportunity to gauge his reactions and concerns against others. Recordings, plays, charts, flannel-graphs, and many other audio-visual materials can be used effectively.

8. *It is not possible to teach all subject matter or to handle all educational problems through group methods.* Individual supervision must be used appropriately to assure that the learning needs of each worker are being met. This type of supervision provides the opportunity for helping the individual worker to acquire specific knowledge and skill, and to apply them to his own job. The individual conference should allow sufficient time and opportunity for the worker to think through his own particular problems. He should be encouraged to bring information from group meetings to the process of analyzing current problems and to carry over knowledge gained from one situation to another.

We are beginning to realize that a worker will not always know what to do in a situation, even though it is similar to others he has handled, unless he has a basic understanding of the underlying principles. Sufficient time for both group and individual supervision must be made available if staff members are to acquire the necessary knowledge and skill to meet the situations at hand.

Individual supervision offers an appropriate means to help the worker with attitudes or anxiety that interfere with his learning and performance. Sometimes when supervisors are not clear about group supervisory methods, they tend to delay or evade responsibility for helping a troubled worker, hoping that the problem will be resolved through the group experience. They hope the group will be a kind of painless cure-all and that the more direct method of discussing the learner's problem in the individual conference can be avoided.

The Use of Group Methods for New Workers

The following excerpts from material provided by state agencies illustrate some of the basic concepts that have been discussed. This type of group training is utilized in many agencies in developing methods of orienting new caseworkers and new supervisors. Texas, Washington, and New York, for example, provide group training in centers for new workers. Other states, such as Louisiana, California, and Montana, have developed orientation manuals to be used by individual supervisors as they work with new staff members, either in individual or group sessions. The various state orientation

plans identify many similar subjects to be taught in group sessions and, in each plan, the use of the individual conference is considered the chief means of applying the training content to the needs of the individual. Group sessions are used for transmission of general knowledge, policy clarifications, and amplification of materials as well as a way for workers to see, through demonstration, discussion, visual aids, and so on, the "hows" of his job.

In general, the subject areas covered in group sessions are: philosophy and objectives of the agency; job responsibilities and organizational structure of the agency; public welfare principles; casework concepts; needs and resources of people; method of studying a case; interviewing; assistance planning; the application interview; growth and development of the individual; how to plan for health needs; sources of information other than the client; community resources and community interpretation; work organization; child welfare services; medical-social services; standards of performance; and other such basic subjects.

In some states, in order to increase the variety of experiences for new workers, there is group consideration of some cases prior to the home visit. Each worker in the group presents a case and reviews briefly what his plan will be at the time of the visit. The casework supervisor helps to stimulate the discussion. It has been found that workers gain a great deal of security if they have had a combination of group discussion and individual conference prior to the home visit.

The following is an excerpt from a report of the training of one worker through the use of group and individual supervision in a training center:

Before Mr. L read the record (of Miss H) assigned to him, he and the other new workers in his unit had discussed the subject of "case analysis" with his training unit supervisor and they had analyzed a case record together. The case of Miss H was then discussed in a conference with his supervisor at which they considered the legal aspects of Miss H's eligibility for an ADC grant and the specific agency policies that were applicable. What were the evidences of financial need? Were the best interests of the children protected when paternity had not been established, nor support secured from their fathers? Did Miss H want to protect these rights of her children? Was she planning to return to work as she had done in the past? If so, did she require any special help in working through her plans, especially in relation to care of her children? Would granting financial assistance periodically on an emergency basis be the most constructive

help that the agency could offer? As these questions were considered, a plan for Mr. L's interview with the client was evolved. Prior to the interview, Mr. L. had also attended the group discussion on the "principles of interviewing" and a "demonstration interview."

At his next conference with his supervisor, the client's and worker's acceptance of each other was apparent. Miss H had talked more freely than she had previously with other workers, and had asked for help with some of her problems. . . .⁴

The following excerpt from the evaluation report of a worker at the end of the training period illustrates how group sessions are further amplified and clarified in individual conferences:

Mrs. X seemed to be sincerely interested in her new job and conscientiously devoted her time to study and work. One strength seemed to be Mrs. X's self-awareness and her frankness in discussing her performance. If she failed to understand or if she disagreed, she made it known, and at the same time was able to accept a difference in viewpoint or a criticism. . . .

The summaries that Mrs. X prepared on the four review cases assigned were satisfactory for a beginning worker. She experienced difficulty at first for two reasons: she was too tense and she tried to aim at conciseness. Her summary on the first assigned case was brief and rather vague. Pertinent background material had not been included and the organization was mainly chronological. I wondered about this summary since on the previous day in group meeting, when the workers "practiced" writing a summary, the one prepared by Mrs. X was unusually good. In conference I found that Mrs. X knew the case material and that she was able to make a fairly good evaluation of the recipient and the case situation. She had a fair idea of the purpose of the home visit but had not been able to bring this to a focus in the written summary. Continued progress was shown in content, evaluation, and organization.⁵

Group Training for Supervisors

Orientation courses for supervisors have also been developed by some agencies. The content includes the minimum knowledge and skill necessary to assure supervisory competence as they begin their work. One plan illustrates the relationship of orientation material to the content of the day-by-day job. The outline includes: the meaning of supervision, the objectives of supervision and how they relate to the purpose and functions of the department, function of the supervisor, principles of learning, tools of supervision, basic

⁴ Margaret S. McMillan, "An Experiment with Staff Workers," mimeographed paper given at American Public Welfare Association Regional Meeting, September, 1953.

⁵ Taken from an evaluative summary of a worker in training.

methods of supervision, supervisory conferences, group conferences, staff meetings, and plan of supervision. State agencies have also developed similar orientation plans with appropriate content for clerical and administrative personnel.

The following excerpts illustrate the use of group training of new supervisors who carry both administrative and supervisory responsibilities. The method used in this instance is similar to that used in the orientation of new staff, showing the relationship of a body of knowledge to the day-by-day job, and then providing individual help in applying the knowledge and developing skill.

The agency from which this example is drawn had field representatives providing administrative supervision to approximately eight supervisors, each of whom carried responsibility for the supervision of seven or eight caseworkers located in one or more county offices. The field representative made regular visits (about every six weeks) to each supervisory-administrative office, spending about two days in each. Regional meetings of the supervisors, of two or three days' duration, were held quarterly.

The following excerpts are taken from the activity reports made by the field representative to his immediate supervisor, the director of field services.

Regional meeting, January 7-9, 1953. In planning the agenda for this meeting, I first attempted to think through the over-all developmental needs of the supervisors. All supervisors have at some time or other expressed need for help in improving supervisory methods in order to be equipped to help their workers to achieve more skill. However, I thought that since we already have had several meetings devoted to a study of supervisory process, perhaps we now needed to begin with something basic which would serve as background information related to casework practice. With enlargement of the supervisor's understanding of what we actually mean by casework practice and more understanding and conviction about the basic concepts underlying this practice, I thought the supervisors would feel more secure and relaxed in the supervisor-worker relationship and could therefore focus more attention on the workers' developmental needs.

One reason that workers sometimes fail to give effective help in individual cases, even after supervisory conferences about the case, may be that the supervisor is so intent on seeing that the necessary service is given that he is unaware of the worker's equipment or preparedness to carry through. Too often, I think, the supervisor expects the worker to acquire within a short time the understanding that he himself has regarding what is to be done and the "how" of doing it. Also, I think that sometimes the supervisor is not clear as to the goals and limitations of service to be given in an individual case, and the direction or focus is lacking.

GROUP TRAINING METHODS

I, therefore, decided that this meeting might well be devoted to a study of the casework process, and that our two broad objectives for this meeting would be (1) to give the supervisors an opportunity to enlarge their body of knowledge regarding the casework method and (2) to help the supervisors to become more aware of the level of the worker's understanding of the total case situation, including an understanding of the problems involved, the individuals with the problems, the worker's preparedness to give the needed service, and the extent of supervisory help that would be needed on a case-by-case basis.

The next part of the report reveals something of the method used in the meeting and of the group participation of the staff in discussing the content. The consideration given to general concepts in casework is shown, as well as the specific application of the concepts to agency cases.

The first day of our meeting was devoted to a discussion of an article on casework practice.⁶ Each supervisor was provided a copy and each in turn read aloud to the group specific sections. This was the first time I had experimented with reading material in a group and I believe that it was very effective. I think this study and discussion helped give the "why" of casework—that is, what we strive to do. There was very good participation from all members of the group throughout our study and discussion of this material.

In the next session, two of the supervisors, Mrs. Z and Mr. Y, presented case situations. Discussion of the cases centered on the problems involved, the evaluation of the individuals concerned with the problems, ways of helping the family with these problems, and what might be expected from the client and members of his family in taking over some responsibility for improving their situation. Following our discussion of the case, we talked about the worker who is to handle the case, the extent to which this worker understands the problems and the individuals involved, his feelings and attitudes toward members of the family, and areas where it is likely that the worker will need the supervisor's help to work more effectively with the family.

In the first case presented, we spent considerable time talking about the worker-client relationship and its importance as a motivating factor in aiding and strengthening the family to assume responsibility for change. We thought that in order to establish this relationship the worker would have to accept the client and other members of his family as they are. In other words, the worker would have to accept them as individuals and understand their behavior. The worker would have to recognize and accept their strengths and limitations, their right for self-determination, and some of their emotional needs, such as need for recognition and a need for someone to believe in them. In order to do this, the worker must have some insight and awareness of how his own feelings and attitudes affect his ability to form this meaningful relationship. We thought this to

⁶ Fern Lowry, "Current Concepts in Social Case-work Practice," *Social Service Review*, Vol. XII, No. 3 (1938), pp. 365-373; No. 4, pp. 571-597.

be one factor in our supervision of workers that we are oftentimes not as aware of as we should be, since we find that the worker may have an intellectual understanding of the problem and the client but that he is not emotionally responsive because of his own inadequate emotional development.

The next paragraph of the field representative's report shows how these general concepts and principles were related to the two cases under discussion. The report ends with the field representative's evaluation of the sessions and with a recommendation for future content.

We intentionally did not attempt to get into a discussion of the supervisory process *per se* in studying the cases since the subject is one we intend to deal with later on. However, we did cover pretty adequately the importance of the supervisor's understanding the worker's level of development, the case situation, and the kind and extent of help the worker will need in order to give effective service on a specific case. Naturally we did touch on supervisory methods, but we related the methods we discussed to the actual case situation and the worker's need for supervisory help. The discussion of the two cases pointed up the fact that effective service often requires patience on the part of the worker and an acceptance of gradual change or progress. We also recognized that the inherent capacities and limitations of the client will determine the casework method and the direction or focus of our services.

I feel rather satisfied about the effectiveness of this meeting and more so since I have had an opportunity to talk with several of the supervisors during subsequent field visits. . . . In subsequent regional meetings, we shall study the developments in these two cases, along with supervisory notes of the conferences with the worker. Also, two additional cases will be presented for discussion.

The field representative's next entries in her notes are reports of individual conferences with two supervisors. In the first, she endeavored to help a supervisor make sound plans for the supervision of his staff, using as an illustration the case discussed at the regional meeting. In an individual conference with another supervisor, the field representative helped him plan a series of group conferences with his caseworkers on the casework concepts discussed in the regional meeting and discussed with him how he might then follow up these points in individual conferences. The regional meeting itself served as a demonstration of how training sessions might be planned for the casework staff.

In March, 1953, a second regional meeting of supervisors was held. The report of this meeting shows how the content of the first meeting was applied by the members in their individual conferences

with staff members and also how the material developed by the supervisors was used in the second meeting. Also, two new cases were introduced and the concepts discussed in the first meeting were reviewed in relation to the new cases. In the second meeting the supervisors participated in a much more purposeful way than in the first.

Regional meeting, March 4-6, 1953. This meeting was a follow-up one to our meeting of January and carried over the same objectives: (1) to give the supervisors an opportunity to enlarge their body of knowledge regarding the casework method and (2) to help the supervisors become more aware of the level of the worker's understanding of the total case situation, the worker's preparedness to give the needed services, and the extent of supervisory help that would be needed.

The agenda included: summarization of high points of reading material studied and discussed during our previous meeting; discussion of developments in cases presented by Mrs. Z and Mr. Y at the previous meeting; study of the supervisory methods employed in helping the worker to carry responsibility for services in these two cases. To assist us in this study, Mrs. Z and Mr. Y provided copies of the case record and copies of their conference discussions with their workers.

Two new cases were analyzed from the standpoint of the problems, possible causes of the problems, client's attitude toward his problems, his capacities and limitations, and the extent of services indicated. We also examined the worker's understanding of the case situations and areas in which he would need the help of the supervisor, both in a consultative and in a teaching capacity, in rendering the most helpful service. Following this discussion, we were able to suggest content for the next several conferences on the case, determining the supervisory approach and method.

I feel encouraged over the results of this meeting for I think it pointed out that the supervisors themselves are acquiring additional knowledge and understanding concerning basic casework practices and also that they are increasing their skill in communicating this knowledge to their workers. Throughout our discussion, there was excellent response and participation from all members of the group. All participants were intensely interested in the case discussions and in the study of the supervisory methods, and I think that this interest can be attributed to the fact that our study and discussion were directly related to the day-by-day job and that it was a learning experience that each can carry over and integrate into practice.

In discussing with the supervisors plans for our next meeting, I suggested that they might be interested in devoting this meeting to a study of the educational processes in supervision or, in other words, that we would not use case material but would relate our discussion entirely to the supervisory process, using only notebook material. The supervisors expressed interest in this type of meeting but suggested that, before planning it, we have one more meeting where two additional cases would be presented. They expressed the opinion that the study of various types of cases was exceedingly helpful to them and they thought that

ADMINISTRATION, SUPERVISION, AND CONSULTATION

one more meeting like the two we had had would be more helpful to them at this time.

Following this second meeting, the field representative again followed up certain points in her visits to individual supervisors. A third regional meeting, held in June, shows the group moved a step forward and concentrated on the supervisory process. The study of the supervision process took on more reality as it was related to the day-by-day job.

Regional meeting, June 11-12, 1953. This meeting was a follow-up meeting to the two previous meetings we have had concerning casework process.

Our planned agenda included group reading and discussion of an article on supervision.⁷ This was followed by presentation of follow-up case and conference material by four of the supervisors who had presented cases in two previous meetings. Discussion at this time centered on evaluating the effectiveness of the services given and of the supervisory help given the worker. Two other members presented new supervisory material for study and discussion.

This was the first time that we had used an article on supervision in this series of meetings. The article had been sent out in advance, but was reread at the beginning of the meeting at the request of the supervisors. It tied in well in the discussion of the conference notes. Throughout our discussion of cases and conference notes, we continually related back to the article and to the study material used in previous meetings.

This entry shows that some repetition of content is needed in teaching. In this meeting, however, the content of the other two meetings was interwoven appropriately with new material. Attempts to integrate knowledge were evident throughout the series of meetings. The field representative's last comment is:

I believe that we have accomplished our objectives in these meetings, since I have noticed in field visits that each supervisor is carrying over into practice much of what he has learned from our discussions. I have noticed, too, that each supervisor reveals a deeper and broader understanding of problems involved in ADC situations and is demonstrating more ability to give effective help to the worker in handling them. The supervisors are making better preparation for their conferences and there is more continuity in their supervision. They are also following through with the workers on selective cases. I feel confident that this experience has helped the supervisors in planning more effective and more frequent staff meetings. At this time the supervisors seem enthusiastic about the meetings they have had and the meetings they plan in the future; heretofore

⁷ Mary C. Hester, "Educational Process in Supervision," *Social Casework*, Vol. XXXII, No. 6 (1951), pp. 242-250.

GROUP TRAINING METHODS

I had found several of the supervisors reluctant to get into the business of planning staff meetings, which was due primarily, I think, to their feeling of insecurity about taking on this responsibility.

In our subsequent regional meetings, we shall continue to examine the developments in the cases and the workers' performance on the cases we have already discussed. Also, some time will be devoted at our next meeting to a study of the supervisory process, with emphasis on the orientation of the new worker. We also plan to focus on analysis and study of the work with youths returned from state schools and on the handling of child welfare service cases.

This series of meetings illustrates the relationship of group teaching to individual supervision. The principles shown here are applicable to group meetings of supervisors and caseworkers or of director of field staff and field representatives. One important aspect of these meetings is the way the teaching of general knowledge and skill was related to the everyday job of helping supervisors to further the objective of improving service. The supervisors, in conferences with their workers, helped them to apply principles that the supervisors themselves had learned through the group experience.

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING READINESS OF STAFF TO FUNCTION WITHOUT SUPERVISION

Charlotte S. Henry

TRADITIONALLY, IT HAS always been the practice in casework agencies for a caseworker to have a supervisor. As a practitioner, the caseworker has been supervised not only administratively, but also in the educational sense. The presumption has been that in order for him to keep on learning, he needed to be taught, and that his supervisor had something to teach him.¹ Until recently, the caseworker who did not achieve supervisorship within four to six years after completing his graduate training was apt to be considered lacking in competence in casework practice as well as in supervisory potentialities. Probably this was related in part to the fact that the relative salary levels of practitioners and supervisors left little choice to the worker who aspired to improve his standard of living and to move ahead in his profession. This resulted in a kind of hierarchy in casework agencies which made difficult the gearing of specific staff functions to individual talents and interests. So long as the opportunities for status and recognition, for original performance and professional independence, and for salary advancement remained at a minimum in casework practice, the caseworker was pushed into considering a supervisory job whether or not he had any inclination for teaching or administration.

Now there are indications that the tide is turning. In many agencies, salaries for experienced caseworkers compare favorably

¹ For convenience, the masculine pronoun is used when referring to the caseworker, and the feminine when referring to the supervisor.

with those for supervisory positions. Before discussion of what this means in terms of a new challenge to the profession, it seems timely to pause for a brief backward look in order to gain perspective. We are prone to belittle what we have begun to outgrow and to look for devices for change before arriving at a rational basis for deciding what or who needs to be changed. Yet, like the adolescent, we have almost equally strong pulls both to hold on to the past and to overthrow it completely.

Emergence of Casework as a Profession

Those of us who belong to the older generation of caseworkers can look back to a day when the ink was hardly dry on our professional diplomas before supervisory responsibilities were thrust upon us. Following World War I, social work ceased to be either a dilettante occupation for amateurs or a militant cause for reformers. The movement toward a professional discipline had been given tremendous impetus by the war and by the social changes contemporary with the war and its aftermath. Casework had developed a body of knowledge and the elements of method and technique which we believed could be taught at both the theoretical and the applicational levels. There was no time to train field work instructors. There was barely time to graduate students before they had to help train the next group. It had not yet become respectable to have feelings of inferiority, much less to talk about them, although we certainly had them. We had learned just enough to appreciate how inadequate our efforts were in behalf of the poor, the sick, and the unhappy. As supervisors, we knew secretly that we had little to offer students except the frantic hope that we could keep a chapter ahead of them.

Casework today seems to bear little relation to what we thought, said, and did as caseworkers in the twenties. In those years contributions from the psychiatric and psychoanalytic professions were just beginning to be felt. For some years to come they offered more in theoretical knowledge about how people "got that way" than how a caseworker could function helpfully in relation to his clients. Long before we had had enough time or experience to integrate into our practice what we were greedily absorbing from

psychoanalysis, we were catapulted into the great depression. Somehow, social work rose to the occasion. Despite the nightmare quality that still lingers around the memory of that period, we learned from our experience much that has become a permanent addition to casework discipline. The demand for workers and supervisors, however, so far exceeded the supply that almost any recent graduate of a professional school could get a supervisory job if he wanted it. World War II brought with it not only personal and professional stress, but also new demands and new opportunities. These war years are still too close for us to be able to make a valid estimate of their permanent impact on our professional course. We know only that the tensions and the human problems of this age have had no precedent. Again we are faced with demands and responsibilities that are far ahead of our preparation to meet them.

Clearly, our profession has grown so rapidly that it is no wonder that strange inconsistencies exist in our practices. Here is a supervisor who has never been a practitioner except as a student, and there is a caseworker of good average competence who is still receiving routine supervision after ten years of experience. However, until very recently, the casework practitioner who was still in practice after even five years was the exception. This is borne out by personnel figures in the agency with which I am associated. In 1943, 42 per cent of our entire professional staff, except district directors and central administrators, had less than two years' experience following completion of graduate training. Today, 71 per cent have had six years or more of staff experience. There is an obvious relation between the improvement in salary levels and the extension of salary ranges for practitioners, and the fact that, in increasing numbers, caseworkers are remaining in practice. Perhaps it is inevitable in the development of a new profession that the early phases should be chiefly marked by attempts to formulate an essential body of knowledge and by the development of a leadership group to teach it. Many caseworkers have had to learn, test, and teach all at the same time, with added responsibility for administration and community interpretation as well. This has left them little time for sorting out their identifications.

Developing Supervisory Competence

The average supervisor defines her job in chiefly pedagogical terms whether she supervises students, beginning workers, or more seasoned practitioners. Yet, according to Webster's definition, a supervisor has a rather remote connection with pedagogy. To him, a supervisor is "one who oversees, superintends, inspects with authority." A great many supervisors probably do not take kindly to the word "authority." If this is true, it may be because we still associate authority with making people do what they do not want to do. However, it may also be related to a lack of clarity about the nature of supervisory authority. Assuming that true authority stems from competence, what is the most essential area of competence for the supervisor—casework practice, teaching, or administration? Or must there be equal competence in all three areas and, if so, how is the new supervisor, experienced only in practice, to develop competence in teaching and administration?

A beginning supervisor who has developed competence and confidence in practice may find it less difficult to teach students or young workers what she herself has learned than to create conditions that will enable workers to get the job done more efficiently. She may be comfortable in orienting individual workers to administrative procedures and policies but feel less competent in integrating the contributions of several workers who have different capacities and varying degrees of experience. For the most part, there is no established method or procedure for enabling her to qualify in advance for her new administrative responsibilities.

Traditionally, the new supervisor has been promoted to her position on the strength of her competence as a caseworker rather than because she has demonstrated ability or even marked interest in administration or teaching. In more highly organized agencies her beginning efforts in supervision are usually supervised by a senior supervisor. Sometimes she has opportunities for other kinds of in-service training—institutes, seminars, or study groups. It is also traditional, in those agencies that offer field work for casework students, for the beginning supervisor to have her first supervisory experience with students. This seems logical; student

case loads are small, the cases are usually less difficult technically, and the supervisor's emphasis is primarily on teaching. She has minimal administrative responsibility as compared with the staff supervisor.

There is difference of opinion, however, as to whether the student can be adequately guided in his introduction to casework practice by a supervisor who is just learning how to teach. In my opinion, field work teaching is a fairly specialized area of supervision and one that might well be designated by its own title. Too often, I believe, it is assumed that staff supervision is just "more of the same" with slight modifications as the worker gains experience. This philosophy may have seemed to serve well enough as long as most caseworkers became supervisors within three or four years after completion of their graduate training, but it is not appropriate today. The demands being made of caseworkers today require, more than ever before, technical skill and maturity that a beginning worker cannot be expected to have developed. The impetus toward developing a skilled practitioner group, however, creates a new urgency for precise definitions of the staff supervisor's functions and areas of responsibility, not only in relation to the experienced worker but also in relation to workers at all levels of experience.

The Experienced Worker

It used to be tacitly accepted that every caseworker wanted to supervise as soon as he could, but that a few had to be restrained because they lacked sufficient competence as caseworkers or were, for some other reason, "not ready." Together with this acceptance, there inevitably developed the unspoken and unacknowledged implication that direct practice was for the inexperienced and the incompetent, the supervisor's competence supposedly compensating for the practitioner's lack of it. We are now gradually getting to the place where we can face the facts more honestly. The truth is that not every caseworker wants to supervise but everyone wants to make more money. Everyone wants to feel that his position carries with it the status and opportunity for professional advancement commensurate with his ability and his experience. And now

comes a brave new murmur—faint as yet, and apparently most often heard from the analytic couch—that not everyone wants to be supervised in the traditional manner for the rest of his professional life.

It may have been expedient in the past to struggle with the philosophical and structural vagueness of our supervisory practices in order to get the job done. The job still needs to get done, but we have passed the stage when it is expedient even to tolerate vagueness. We can no longer put off facing our inconsistencies, or delay trying to resolve them, if we are to meet the qualitative standards we have set for ourselves. A caseworker can be truly helpful to the client who is struggling for a better way of mastering interpersonal and environmental tensions only if he has maturity and capacity for self-dependence that go beyond intellectual understanding or manipulative skill. If this is not so, he is in danger of making the client the instrument for his own vicarious self-mastery. The questions that we are considering here are when and how the worker can be said to have achieved self-dependence and what part supervision should play in his preparation for it.

We have not heretofore wholly disregarded the need for some demarcation in the worker's experience between the phase of being taught and the phase of more independent functioning. For years we have vaguely identified something called "consultation" as an appropriate method of supervision for an experienced worker, but we have not determined who the experienced worker is, nor how consultation differs from the other kinds of supervision. Presumably the caseworker takes the initiative in consulting and looks upon the supervisor as an experienced colleague with whom thinking can be shared, rather than as a superior. Whoever supervises the caseworker, however, is his administrative superior, and in the essential structure of a social agency she must be his evaluator. Therefore, it is part of her responsibility to put a value judgment on his work. Her administrative authority does not need to rule her out as a consultant, but neither does it justify the assumption that she can offer more in the collaborative interchange with the experienced worker than his other experienced colleagues who, like him, are concentrating on practice.

Few caseworkers need to be urged to talk about cases in which they have emotional investment. We all have dependency needs and exhibitionistic urges. It may not, however, be in the best interests of effective practice, or the fulfilment of agency function, or of the most productive use of supervisory time that these needs always be gratified directly or by the supervisor. The caseworker spends a good deal of his time assuring clients of the wisdom of seeking help when they need it and of talking out problems before they become overwhelming. It would be unfortunate if he himself could not act on his own convictions. But it does seem reasonable to assume that mature experience will go hand in hand with increased satisfaction in discovering one's own solutions through analysis of one's own cases, through professional reading, and through self-study. Consultation then becomes valuable as a means of testing out one's conclusions against the experience of others.

Independence in casework practice should never mean professional isolation. Experience and maturity bring with them heightened awareness of the seriousness of the caseworker's responsibility and of the tremendous difficulties faced by the whole profession. Most of our clients are emotionally sick people. We have charted few courses in the more complicated areas of our practice. In the matter of casework treatment there is more disagreement than agreement among us about the what, why, and how of procedures, techniques, and even of casework objectives. Not least frustrating are the semantic problems we encounter whenever we attempt precise formulation of standards and criteria. Furthermore, for the most part we are not private practitioners. We work in agencies that are accountable for the performance of each staff member. It is essential, therefore, that agencies continue to maintain structural channels for enabling staff to be most effectively accountable to administration.

Internship

These are not simple problems and there are no simple solutions. I am convinced that we shall contribute little to the solutions of these problems by discussing how to emancipate the experienced

worker from supervision unless we also critically examine the quality of supervision available to caseworkers in the early stages of their experience. We must first clearly identify the two accepted functions of supervision: (1) administrative and (2) educational. The latter is perhaps most constructively performed when it is self-eliminating. When we think of the educational function of supervision as a relatively time-limited one, an aspect of the caseworker's preparation for independent operation, we turn the spotlight directly on the worker and the supervisor.

In some agencies, the first year or two of experience following the completion of graduate school are comparable to the young doctor's internship. Some protection is offered the worker in the selection of his cases and in the amount of responsibility he is expected to carry. He is presumed to need regular supervisory conferences, with the supervisor's taking considerable leadership in planning and directing them. Supervision has chiefly an educational emphasis for the intern caseworker, but it is also geared toward helping him relate himself to a job responsibility within the administrative framework of a particular agency, as well as toward enabling him to test out his knowledge in practice and in supervisory discussion. There is tremendous variation from one agency to another in what is expected of the beginning worker and in the kinds of supervisory guidance available to him. Unfortunately, we have few criteria for determining the kinds of supervisory guidance that are most helpful in the casework intern's professional development. It seems to me that breadth and variety of experience are most important during this period. The young worker is not ready to concentrate on depth and quality of performance and becomes unnecessarily threatened when these are expected of him. He needs to get a broad perspective of the aims and means of casework as practiced in his agency, and on the many variations possible in furthering the agency's philosophy and policies. In fact, he might more quickly discover the need for developing his own professional identity if his supervisors were rotated.

Presumably, at the end of the internship period the caseworker is ready to carry his own weight in terms of job responsibility. He can be expected to tackle any kind of case and to need supervisory help chiefly in those cases that involve psychological subtleties both

in their evaluation and in the technical aspects of treatment. He should be increasingly aware of what he wants to know and of what he wants to achieve. He should be ready to take the initiative in supervisory conferences, and may make excessive demands on his supervisor. This is the most critical period in the worker's development. At present, however, criteria regarding the quality and quantity of work that can be expected of the worker and also comparable criteria regarding his supervision are far from definite.

In recent articles, Dr. Babcock and Mrs. Schour identified the four kinds of stress from without and from within which universally besiege the caseworker.² These papers threw into sharp focus the fact that, as supervisors, we are not well enough equipped to help the young worker cope with these converging areas of stress and with the anxiety they create in him. We discriminate poorly between the young worker's immediate capacities and an ultimate standard of casework performance. In Mrs. Schour's words, "We have made too great demands on the new worker too soon. On the other hand, we have continued to supervise the experienced worker too long."³ In our earnest focusing on the client, we may overlook the caseworker, and, as supervisors, may act almost as if we were treating the client by remote control. In so far as this is true, our sins catch up with us in the annual ordeal of the evaluation conference. Then supervisor and worker cannot avoid facing each other as people. Dr. Babcock and Mrs. Schour referred only to the caseworker's evaluation anxiety, but I suspect that in most evaluation conferences there are two anxious people.

As in most human endeavors, we have gone through cycles in our supervisory philosophy. Many of us remember unhappily the day when supervision was too exclusively supervisee-centered. That was the day when the supervisor supposedly parried the caseworker's every question with "What do *you* think?"—meanwhile making note of his every halting word or squirming gesture. Or at least the miserable worker thought she did. It was not without reason that we went to the other extreme in supervision only to find that

² Charlotte G. Babcock, M.D., "Social Work as Work," *Social Casework*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 10 (1953), pp. 415-422; Esther Schour, "Helping Social Workers Handle Work Stresses," *ibid.*, pp. 423-428.

³ Schour, *ibid.*, p. 427.

the young worker's human needs have been so much pushed out of sight that they are cropping out in the wrong places. The time has come to achieve a balance in supervision, so that while the immediate focus is on the worker, the ultimate objective remains good service to the client.

Capacity for Professional Autonomy

In order to develop the capacity for professional autonomy, the worker must do more than acquire a prescribed amount of knowledge or submit to a supervisory process. He must himself be part of the process. Nor can he truly acquire knowledge about human beings without in some way applying it to himself. The methods and techniques that he learns for helping other people can be effective in their application chiefly through the utilization of his own personality. *He* is his most important professional tool. Therefore his professional preparation cannot be considered adequate unless it includes learning to reconcile what he has always thought and believed about himself with the knowledge about other people that he is acquiring and using in his practice. In the continuing one-to-one relationship with the supervisor, the worker experiences some elements of the casework process which he is learning to apply. We need to bring this aspect of the supervisory relationship again into focus, with acceptance of the fact that the supervisor's responsibility includes helping the young worker to handle emotional stresses which are inevitably associated with his professional growth.

Perhaps we would have less need for concern about establishing criteria for determining the caseworker's readiness to function without supervisory guidance, if we could first take an honest look at supervision as it now exists. We might uncover evidence of supervisory needs and tendencies that reinforce unhealthy dependency patterns in the supervisee, as well as of difficulties that the supervisor needs to overcome if she is to accept wholeheartedly the worker's ultimate emancipation. Such a serious self-study would lead to objective conclusions about what qualifications and preparation a supervisor needs to have, and to a much more comprehensive and explicit formulation of the content, method, and scope of supervision for workers at all levels of experience.

The agency with which I am associated has this year accepted a revised classification for caseworkers. Group I, with two annual increments, corresponds to what I have called the casework internship. Group II is divided into sub-groups, A and B, each providing for four annual increments. Group III has provision for seven annual increments, and is reserved for the worker who has demonstrated outstanding competence and originality in casework practice, supervision, or community activities and who has achieved at least a IIB classification in the other two areas in so far as they relate to his particular job. The Group I worker has a full evaluation each year. The IIA worker has a full evaluation at the end of the first year and every three years thereafter regardless of classification. Either the supervisor or the worker may request a written evaluation at any time if a special need for it is indicated. The Group IIA worker is expected to have regular supervision, but with emphasis on preparing him gradually for self-dependence. The Group IIB worker is administratively responsible to a supervisor and is free to consult her or others regarding his practice. The Group III worker is presumed to have demonstrated for at least four years his capacity to function in a self-dependent manner in all areas of his practice.

Since this revised classification has been in effect only since the beginning of this year, we have nothing to report about our experience with it, except for some of the questions it has provoked. The worker receives an annual increment on condition of satisfactory progress, whether or not he is formally evaluated. The questions most frequently raised relate to the term "satisfactory progress." What are the specific criteria for judging satisfactory progress at each level of experience? How can it be adequately estimated without formal evaluation procedure? Will a supervisor who is functioning only administratively in relation to Group IIB and Group III workers have sufficient knowledge of their work to estimate whether they have made satisfactory progress, or to participate in formal evaluation procedure? Can we arrive at more objective methods for determining and measuring quality of performance and for relating it realistically to quantity? What is meant by independent or self-dependent practice and what is specifically involved in being "administratively responsible to a supervisor"? What

about the worker in Group IIB who continues to ask for weekly supervisory conferences? How can the mechanics of consulting with other colleagues be facilitated in a large, districted agency without seriously reducing production? Is it necessary to have administrative channeling for such consultation? What part can group discussion and study play in providing opportunities for interchange for experienced workers? What part does psychiatric consultation play? Is there danger that the experienced worker may lean too heavily on the psychiatric consultant without exploring fully the resources within the casework group?

These are a few of the questions for which we have not yet found answers. Some of them may recede in importance or be answered as we gain experience and assurance. Other questions that have not yet occurred to us may become more crucial. Perhaps the major concern implied in most of our questions is for clarification of what needs to be resolved on the part of both worker and supervisor in order for both to accept comfortably the worker's professional emancipation and the necessary administrative relationship.

Conclusion

The emergence of a group of mature practitioners forces upon us the awareness that, henceforth, supervision of caseworkers in the earlier stages of their experience must be geared to preparing them for self-dependent practice. This is a challenge to us to examine our present methods and attitudes in supervision with a view to setting up standards for supervision of workers at each level of experience. To keep pace with the progress made in practice we must define more exactly the qualifications for a supervisor and implement procedures by which she can prepare herself for teaching and administrative requirements.

The caseworker's gradual development toward maximum self-direction in practice must go hand in hand with the supervisor's readiness to accept and facilitate his urge toward independence. Resolution of the worker's dependence upon supervisory authority demands also resolution of the supervisor's dependence upon being an authority to the worker. At the same time, the administrative authority of the supervisor must be comfortably accepted by both persons as a facilitating aspect of sound agency organization.

CONTROL AND FREEDOM IN THE CASEWORKER'S GROWTH¹

Emmy Aufricht

WHEN NEW TASKS emerge in the development of casework administration, it is helpful to recall the characteristics that distinguish casework from other professions engaged in helping people, particularly from psychiatry. Psychoanalysts and psychiatrists are usually concerned with the total functioning and integration of the human personality. In some clinic settings psychiatric caseworkers also do intensive therapy under psychiatric supervision; but in general the caseworker who functions as an agency employee has a more specific focus and more specific goals. To be eligible for the services of the agency the client must have failed physically or mentally to meet the demands of some basic life activity or relationship. It is not the mere fact of breakdown that makes him eligible but the specific nature of the breakdown, be it in employment, health, education, marital or parental relationship, or in another area. Any help given by the caseworker with respect to the specific problem is the result of the caseworker's twofold approach: (1) practical assistance or guidance concerning the environmental problem to be met; (2) a relationship between caseworker and client in which the client may develop more self-confidence, more self-understanding, and more purposeful direction of his activities. Although the caseworker must constantly keep the total personality of the client in mind and strive to understand it

¹ This paper was presented as a discussion of Charlotte S. Henry's paper.

in order to give meaningful help, the presenting problem remains the focal point of the caseworker's operation.

Casework activities, then, consist at the same time of clearly circumscribed, tangible, and practical services given according to agency policy and program within the framework of total community services, and of an intangible, highly personal interaction with the client. The history of the client's early development and current functioning may reveal a good deal about him but it leaves much untold. Important facets of the client's response to life, but not all facets, will emerge from the interrelationship between the client and his individual caseworker. What the client reveals of himself and what he gains from this revelation will depend to some degree on the caseworker's personality, as well as on his training, skill, and experience. In many agency programs the decision to give or not to give tangible services will depend partly on the diagnostic impression that emerges from the client's interplay with the caseworker. Thus, in theory, we can separate the tangible services and the intangible processes of casework, but in practice they are so interdependent that we find it difficult to keep separate their relations to administration. Nevertheless, their relations to administration are different, and this is one of the most basic perplexities in supervisory practice.

Reasonable uniformity in determining eligibility and reasonable equality of tangible service can be maintained only by centering the responsibility for administration in one person. Responsibility implies control, at least if we are to be fair to the person carrying responsibility. There is no reason why the administrator and his delegate, the supervisor, should not exercise control over tangible services given to clients. Where the diagnostically and therapeutically significant interaction between caseworker and client is concerned, however, it is not yet clear just how much administrative responsibility is truly effective in securing optimum service to clients. Where and when does control begin to defeat its purpose by hindering the caseworker's growth and initiative?

Miss Henry has drawn our attention to the lag that exists in the adaptation of supervisory practice to the emergence in the field of the experienced practitioner who continues to give full-time service to clients. She has pointed out that, until recently, service

to clients was entrusted almost exclusively to inexperienced workers whose functioning required close direction in all areas. She has helped us to see, in historical perspective, why we have not progressed further in defining and using casework consultation. Certainly there was no occasion to prepare the worker for independence and initiative in the use of his relationship with clients if, by the time the worker had had substantial experience, he was no longer directly involved in such relationships. If possession of adequate professional experience meant taking on responsibility for directing the tangible and intangible casework activities of beginning workers, then it was most appropriate that a worker's own experience in being supervised should demonstrate to him the direction and control he would soon have to apply to others.

In suggesting that there may be advantages in the rotation of supervisors for beginning workers, Miss Henry has touched on, without actually identifying, an important element in the process of maturation: preparation for the use of free and responsible choice. She sees consultation as a valuable means of testing out one's own conclusions against the experience of others. I would go further in defining consultation, as something distinct from supervision.

Supervision involves administrative responsibility for agency operation and for this reason implies control. Even where the experienced worker is concerned, the supervisor retains control over the administration of agency services and over the worker's employment or promotion. For this purpose one has to evaluate the worker's effectiveness in the agency. Consultation, on the other hand, carries no administrative responsibility; it implies availability without control. Psychiatric consultation as used by agencies illustrates this point. The consultant makes his knowledge available to the worker in a relationship that will further the worker's growth. It is the consultant's responsibility to give opportunity for progress to the worker, but he is not responsible for the worker's actual performance or for the progress of the client. The casework consultant should differ from the psychiatric consultant only in the content and focus of the teaching; not in the assumption of responsibility. In a setting where the trained caseworker has mature professional status, he alone is responsible for his diagnostic and therapeutic activities in individual cases while the supervisor is

responsible for the worker's total service to the agency in terms of continued employment or dismissal.

During the early phases of learning, the casework student or trainee has to acquire a knowledge of agency program and structure; he has to be shown step by step how a relationship can become a conscious instrument in helping people. He is bewildered and dependent. As in childhood, control gives security during this period and lays the foundation for future strength and independence. Separation of administrative and teaching functions at this level would be premature. When control is still a helpful factor in the learning process, the teacher's administrative responsibilities do not disrupt the tutorial relationship. In this phase the unity of tangible and intangible services is demonstrated by the unity in the supervisor's responsibility for both. Of course, the beginning supervisor, if he is to gain strength, needs similar control and should be equally accountable for the process of individual conferences with supervisees, as the beginning worker is accountable for casework interviews.

At the end of the training period the caseworker should have gained understanding of agency function within community structure, and of the caseworker's role within agency structure. He should recognize some of the dynamics between his own and the client's feelings and their mutual impact. Then the time has come for the worker to develop initiative in observing and testing his own functioning. Although he needs help with this, he is now at a stage of development where control as an element of learning has lost its value. When the worker is ready to reveal his personal explorations and tentative conclusions, he needs the teacher of his own choosing. Choice in the use of teaching resources will now strengthen his judgment. Full discussion of his evaluation with the administrative superior is a valuable instrument in the worker's development of self-awareness, aside from being administratively necessary, but evaluation should not be made by the person who has been the only resource available to him in his meeting required standards. The worker can be held fully responsible for the state of his development only if he has had a choice in the selection of his tutor. The supervisor can judge fairly only if he has not been

involved—except by the worker's choice—in guiding the worker's progress. It is the absence of choice by the worker that enhances the supervisor's anxiety in the evaluation process.

I believe, therefore, that, at the end of initial training—whether it be three or four years including academic training—the worker should be allowed rapidly increasing responsibility in requesting consultation and choosing his consultants. If the smallness of an agency does not permit choice from within the staff, then some arrangements with outside consultants should be developed. Ultimately, only the worker can discover when he learns best by experimentation and when by discussion. Without the chance to exert his judgment, and without room for trial and error, he will fail to discover this. If the agency does not like a worker's use of such freedom, let the worker bear the consequences; otherwise he will not reach his full potential or be truly mature in his work with clients. Prolonged restraint of initiative in one essential area of functioning affects total professional functioning. Until we have given the caseworker a better opportunity to carry responsibility for his own development, he will be slow in becoming ready to function without control. He will also be slow to meet what I would see as two of the most important criteria of real independence: (1) initiative in trying new methods, in testing personal observations, and in seeking new conclusions; and (2) the courage to defend this initiative.

INTEGRATION OF THE TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF SUPERVISION ¹

Jeanette Hanford

MISS HENRY'S PAPER presents an interesting and lucid review of the problems of supervision in casework agencies, and points a direction we might take in solving or at least modifying them. It also provokes further thought, and its main points call for affirmation, further exploration, or, in some instances, disagreement. I shall discuss the concepts of supervision revealed in both Miss Henry's and Mrs. Aufricht's papers and shall suggest some questions that need further consideration before we can resolve either the conflict of opinions or the confusions of operation which seem to characterize our present plight.

Miss Henry comments that the average supervisor defines her job chiefly in pedagogical terms and tends to avoid or to overlook the so-called "administrative" aspects of it. Historical reasons for this concept of supervision can be found and Miss Henry and I are evidently in full accord on the need to review and probably to revise it. Whether there is a need for separation of the teaching and administrative aspects, however, or, instead, a need for their clarification and integration, is the point of departure in this discussion. The question is even more sharply pointed up in Mrs. Aufricht's paper by her apparent belief in a dichotomy between the responsibility the agency assumes for the carrying out of its practical services and its responsibility for the less tangible or therapeutic aspects of its casework service. It is my belief that an agency

¹ This paper was presented as a discussion of Charlotte S. Henry's paper.

has a responsibility, both to its clients and to the community that it represents, for the totality of its services and for their quality, and that teaching and administration cannot be separated if they are a true expression of that responsibility. I should like to consider the nature of this responsibility as a key to our questions about supervision.

Can we agree that an agency has responsibility: (1) for defining its function and operating within a framework appropriate to the needs of the community and the skills and resources of its staff, (2) for creating a setting within which the staff can carry out the agency's services and for helping staff members to function at the optimum level of their abilities, (3) for knowing enough about the work being done (a) to plan program, assess unmet needs, and report to the community, and (b) to accept responsibility for the job being done, to assign work, to make the best use of staff skills, and to promote staff members wisely? If these responsibilities are accepted, does it not follow that teaching may be part of the administrative function, to be carried out discriminately and balanced with other needs which the worker may have so that functioning may be effective? Specifically we might say that an agency and its casework staff function most comfortably and effectively if (1) function, policy, and procedure are well formulated and the caseworker has someone to whom he can turn when problems of their application or interpretation arise; (2) there is someone who is enough in touch with the caseworker's performance (a) to make appropriate assignments and to consider with him priorities, points of pressure, and special needs as they arise, (b) to help him assess areas where help is needed and to give this help or secure it elsewhere, (c) to be able to evaluate his work and to make responsible recommendations in terms of salary, promotion, supervisory needs, and the like; (3) there is a channel for using the caseworker's experience and knowledge in shaping agency program and for enabling the total agency to function in mutual understanding and confidence.

It is obvious that in most agencies this person or channel is the supervisor; or perhaps we would like to find another name for this controversial figure. Only in a very small agency is it possible for the caseworker to function without some such channel of

delegated responsibility. In very large agencies all members of the staff except the executive—a lonely person who has only his board—are necessarily involved in this two-way process of responsibility, helpfulness, and communication. But it is asked, "Are not these responsibilities too much to expect of a supervisor who is only a poor human being after all?" Echoes of this question are heard in Miss Henry's paper, and I agree that it may be asking too much of a person whose only experience in being supervised is one of being taught casework in a vacuum, or who has reached supervisory classification without consideration of his capacities, to convey to another person both the content and framework of the agency's job. I am suggesting, therefore, that we need to learn to practice supervision, as we do casework, in terms of evaluating the worker's capacity for adequate functioning, the help he needs to achieve this, the points at which he can take greater responsibility, and the communication necessary to ensure the best use of his time and skill as well as the responsible functioning of the agency. It is obvious that an inexperienced worker will need help of many kinds, including help in understanding and mastering his own impulses and attitudes. It is also obvious that as he progresses he should acquire increased knowledge, assurance, and the capacity to diagnose and to treat appropriately. Whether or not he should function without supervision is another question.

Perhaps the title of the main paper poses a question of semantics since neither Miss Henry nor Mrs. Aufrecht seems to advocate the dropping of responsible communication between the agency's administration and its experienced casework staff. The words "consultation," "structural channeling," and "accountability" frequently are used to describe this communication and the use of the word "supervision" is avoided. In my opinion, the broad concept of supervision is implicit in all these terms. The main paper suggests the need to scrutinize the total process much more specifically; and as this is done it may be that we shall become more comfortable both with the word and with the concepts involved. The use of the term "consultation" is particularly relevant to our discussion.

In a strict sense consultation may be defined as the process in which an expert gives advice or help in the field of his special

knowledge to another professional person who is free to use it or not as a means of enriching his own understanding and practice. Consultation may be distinguished from supervision by the fact that it is not in the direct administrative line of authority. Concepts of the sound professional use of consultation have been developed in the field² with definitions of the respective roles of the consultant, the practitioner using the help, and the agency providing it.

This formulation clarifies the differentiation between the role of the supervisor and of the consultant, and the responsibility of the agency to provide clearly specified channels through which consultation is made available. If we wish to use the term more loosely—in the sense of expecting the worker to carry her own thinking as far as possible before seeking supervisory help—we must ask ourselves two questions: (1) Is this not a good pedagogical principle applicable to all levels of practice and, if not, at what point should we expect the worker to start thinking for himself? (2) How does this concept of "consultation" relate to the responsibility of the supervisor to know the scope and quality of work and to offer guidance when it is needed in the best interest of the job? The worker's freedom to consult if and as he wishes, with whom-ever he chooses, poses administrative questions that make such a plan appear unsound if not impractical. It is true that expert help from specialized members of the casework staff as well as from such other professions as psychiatry may be desirable or necessary, for example, in relation to homemaker service, problems of the aged, child placing, and unmarried parenthood. The use of this kind of expert help, however, still requires a planful and organized process which involves participation of the supervisor, who, with the worker, must take responsibility for the job as a whole.

I am not sure that the number of years of the worker's experience can or should be used to decide the terminal point for some kinds of help given him, since workers vary in rate of development and skill. It is also apparent that we do not have well-developed criteria for the readiness of staff to function in the independent way described. The Family Service Association of Cleveland has em-

² Charlotte Towle, unpublished material for workshop use. University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration.

barked on a plan which may serve to sharpen our definition of supervision and to differentiate in a better formulated manner the kind and degree of supervision needed by workers at different levels of experience. This is well worth the attention of the field. The classification plan in the agency with which I am associated calls for a seven- rather than a six-year period before the worker is expected to function on the full range of cases with as much assurance as a supervisor. During that time he is expected to achieve increasing independence and competence, and to take increasing responsibility for his own developmental needs and for contributing to and participating in the administrative functioning of the agency. At the end of this period, if we have done a good job, both the worker and the agency should have confidence in his professional skill and maturity in relation to the technical aspects of casework practice and his capacity to function in the agency. Regardless of whether he is retained at the top of this classification, is promoted to the rather special classification of Caseworker III, or is made a supervisor, he will not be without supervision. Supervision will be differentiated according to his needs, but will represent the chain of agency responsibility and helpfulness. It is trite to say that not all people at any one level of experience possess a standard set of skills, yet this fact must be recognized in our planning if we are to make the best use of staff skills and capacities. Sound planning is possible only if responsible and accurate evaluations and appropriate help are available.

Nevertheless, as one looks at one's own agency or considers practice in other agencies, it is apparent that a great deal more work is necessary in identifying and describing areas and levels of supervision. Is it as routine as we say, or as lacking in sensitivity to the worker's needs? Is it really oriented primarily to teaching? If so, what is the educational content and what are the methods used? How much time is actually spent in supervision? What do these beginning workers need to be taught and what are the appropriate and effective methods of handling an internship type of experience? How long should that experience be and what should we expect realistically at the end of it? Until we have answered some of these questions factually, we all may be tilting at windmills. There are some suggestions, however, that the

trouble may lie in our attitudes as much as in the facts, and these may need exploration. Miss Henry suggests that there may be tendencies that reinforce dependency patterns and mentions Dr. Babcock's recent paper, which vividly pointed up some of the attitudes that are prevalent in the field. Allowing for the fact that it is entirely human to have feelings about authority and about having one's work, as Webster puts it, "overseen," we are still confronted with the fact that our efforts to provide supervision—with the worker's development and welfare at heart—still seem to make both supervisors and caseworkers uncomfortable. Supervisors still protest against the administrative aspects of their jobs. Few people working in the many complex organizations in our society are without supervision; something about social work supervision, however, seems to cause more concern than that of business, industry, or the allied professions. It has been suggested that one reason for the conflict and for difficulty in freeing the worker for more independent functioning is the tendency to supervise in terms of the needs of the case rather than the skills of the worker.

This tendency is recognized as having two facets: (1) increasingly difficult case loads that require an understanding of and help with basic problems of adjustment, and the consequent problem of finding a balance between the needs of the case and skills of the worker, and (2) the tendency of inexperienced supervisors to project their own goals and expectations of skill onto the worker—sometimes known as carrying a case by "remote control." Both these aspects of the problem require further study and experimentation since both stem from a wish to give the best service to clients and difficulty in establishing the educational level and treatment potential of the worker. A decision to limit a casework service is a serious one, if a skilful and comprehensive treatment program could bring about more effective and lasting results. It is equally serious to involve a worker in a course of action which he does not really understand or with which he does not feel prepared to cope. Fortunately, clients have their own defenses against some of our more fumbling efforts, but this does not relieve us of the necessity of approaching the problem in a disciplined and thoughtful way. It might be helpful for us to realize that supervisory help

that is beyond the ability of the worker to integrate or put into use will not produce good casework service for the client and may undermine the confidence of the worker in functioning up to the limit of his real capacities. The worker's problem in trying to carry a case at the level at which his supervisor might carry it, rather than at his own level, is obvious. The anxieties of the supervisor and the worker can easily interact, with resultant feelings of helplessness and inadequacy on the part of the worker and of frustration on the part of the supervisor.

Thus these two aspects of the problem point to the need for more study of the differentiation of appropriate levels of treatment and of the educational needs of workers; at present, perhaps, they combine to produce some of the restiveness that is apparent in the field in regard to supervision. A worker who is constantly over-reaching himself, trying to do what he does not fully understand or feel confident to do, or who senses in subtle ways that his skills are not adequate in the eyes of the supervisor or the agency, is under a burden which may impede learning and development; in extreme cases it may immobilize him or produce extreme dependency and resentment. These problems in our supervision may not be the only causes of difficulty, but they do suggest a course of self-examination that might lead us to be more realistic in our expectations of the worker, might result in his increased self-confidence and maturity, and might give us a sounder and more effective kind of casework service.

Mrs. Aufrecht's thesis that the worker has total responsibility for the development of his casework skills is an interesting one, although I cannot support it. I do believe, however, that we need to give the caseworker more confidence in his ability to function at the level of his experience, press him less to do what he is not equipped to do, and expect him to think more for himself from the very beginning of training. Workers maturing under such a system should not need a complete termination of teaching help, but should gradually have learned to use help to supplement rather than substitute for their own knowledge and skills. It is this attitude of confidence, supplemented by help where it is needed, that marks the supervision given to administrative staff. Perhaps

if it were applied throughout an agency to a greater degree, growth and maturity might be accelerated.

In summary, the main paper and those of the discussants reflect concern both about concepts of and attitudes toward supervision. The suggestion has been made that some solution may be found in a fresh approach to administrative planning for supervision and in further study of points at which it still is needed or at which it might be given up. This discussant believes that plans for giving up supervision rest on an incomplete concept of what is involved, and that what is needed, rather, is consideration of how the teaching and administrative aspects of supervision are inter-related, what teaching method and content are under consideration, and what are the actual needs of staff at various levels of experience for help in functioning within the agency at optimum capacity. Further suggestion is made as to the need for factual analysis of method and content of supervisory practice and for more discriminating application of supervisory skills.

CURRENT AND FUTURE TRENDS IN RECORDING

Bernice Bish

A RECENT NEWSPAPER item from the National Records Management Council made these startling statements: More than 450,000,000 filing cabinet drawers in the United States are filled with business records that could safely be destroyed. Expensive office space is now occupied by 200,000,000 file drawers of material that should be relegated to warehouses.

The most effective means of lowering the costs of paper work is to prevent unnecessary papers from coming into being. This can be done through a rigid system of forms control, streamlining the paper work that is actually necessary, encouraging the preparation of shorter reports, employing standardized replies to correspondence when practical, and so forth. The science of record control, of streamlining the processing and disposition of papers, has come of age. We may well ask, "What has business learned about records and record keeping that can be applied to social work?"

Social agency records are written accounts of facts or events. Without some kind of record, no administrator can keep in mind the many and pertinent details involved in making and carrying out policy decisions, nor can the caseworker recall the facts of individual client situations, or the progress of each interview.

When we raise questions about record keeping, it is not to deny the need for some kind of record but to determine whether or not we have the most useful instrument to serve the purpose for which a record is designed. Three types of records—administrative, statistical, and case—are common to most social agencies.

Administrative Recording

Some administrative recording is mandatory in nature and its volume is not within the control of the agency. This type of recording includes such items as reports required by county, state, or federal bodies related to the administration of large public programs; the voluntary agency's report of how it meets the requirements for its charter; the financial reports needed by the staff and governing body for planning annual appropriations; reports on participation in social security and retirement programs; tax statements and rulings by the Bureau of Internal Revenue; auditor's reports which must be kept for a specified number of years.

The agency administrator has control, however, over the volume and the future use of records for program planning and policy making. These may include committee reports, board meeting minutes, and policy statements, all of which are related to the development or the carrying out of the functions of the agency. Suggesting the systematic destruction of all this material after a given period of time would probably be considered rank heresy. One might ask, "Where, then, would students get material for theses, and where would our publicity departments get historical data for releases at times of anniversary meetings or special celebrations?" But why have we not destroyed work sheets and unnecessary reports that fill so much space as they accumulate? The development of criteria for the destruction or retention of records, and the assignment of staff time for this particular job, may seem expensive today, but for the future effective use of the material these measures will represent a saving. Fewer papers will accumulate and less storage space will be needed.

Statistical Reports

Statistical reports are required in all social agency programs. They are vital in the interpretation of the agency's needs, in program development, and in staff assignment. In spite of these very important uses, we have done little in the imaginative development of new ways to gather and interpret this material. Except for the large public or private agency, the hiring of specialized personnel for developing these reports is probably not justified. Since many of

the social agencies are located in small cities with limited staff, the social work profession must take the initiative in devising the means by which we may use to advantage the materials collected.

Statistical records may be divided into three groups: (1) administrative records, which include material related to agency planning, policy making, and staff assignment on the local level; (2) reports to financing bodies—for the public agency, reports to its county, state, or federal body; and for the voluntary agency, to its membership or central financing body; and (3) reports to national membership bodies or federal or state programs. All of these are useful for the understanding of specific agency problems so that programs may be properly organized to meet new needs, or so that guidance may be offered a local affiliate. Much can be learned from the wise use of tabulated facts.

Generally speaking, the collection of statistics is considered by even our most conscientious staff members as a burden and a bore. This has some basic implications for our field. Has the collected material been used in such a way that staff may see how the results of its efforts are related to the human beings served? Social work students have been more interested in the material that helps them to understand the human beings who will eventually be their clients than in the tabulation of facts that seem to be unrelated to service to people. Furthermore, the nature of most research projects or theses does not stimulate the student to further work in this area. In fact, most students frankly say, "Never again will I become involved in such an undertaking!"

Statistics can come alive when they are collected selectively and used against a background of the community. An agency needs to know what statistics to collect. The most elaborate and detailed statistical material, unless gathered purposefully, can be most confusing and useless. Statistical material gathered by national membership or federal agencies can have little meaning unless there is agreement on definition of the items collected. Even when common definitions are followed, the greatest care has to be used in applying national findings to local community problems. For example, as an administrator of a combined family and children's casework agency, I am interested in the facts published about the percentage of brief- and continued-service cases in an agency's case load. If I take this

one fact alone and begin to compare my agency with agencies in cities of like size, I may arrive at some very erroneous conclusions, unless I know enough about the responsibility of each of the other agencies in its individual setting and about the community each serves to be sure I have facts that can be used for comparison. I do not deny the importance of such data but advise caution in their use, particularly with respect to inter-agency comparisons. The material from the national agency relating to broad program trends can, however, be of immense value in planning.

Imaginative, creative planning in the collection and use of materials of statistical nature will lessen their burdensome, boring nature and will result in our having more pertinent facts and better understanding of them. Not every city will be able to afford to collect and tabulate material by IBM methods, but this is one way in which extensive data can be collected and analyzed so that they can be effectively used for better service to the community. Although IBM has been particularly useful to our relatively large agency, the same information can be gathered by hand methods.

I believe that, with increased knowledge and with the emergence of general professional agreement among social workers of competence and skill, categories of evaluation will develop which will lend themselves to statistical tabulation. This will require experimentation with statistical findings verified by reading narrative records which we shall still want to preserve. The time involved in making these correlations will be well spent if a method is developed which will shorten some of our present time-consuming and elaborate methods.

Statistical material can also be used in an agency's staff training and development program. For example, the simple tabulation of the ages of children in the client group served by my agency indicated that 50 per cent of the children were under 5 years of age. Hence, we are planning to offer psychiatric seminars, designed to give the casework staff additional understanding of children in this age group, their normal and abnormal behavior, and their relationships within the family, as a means of sharpening treatment skills. For the interpretation of agency program and the development of policy and program for service to children, this tabulation will also

have real meaning. In planning for the care of children who need to be away from their families, for example, if 50 per cent of the children are under the age of 5 years, we shall need to find foster homes for young children rather than institutions. This information has real significance in terms of a community program for children. In our city, institutions serving children of 6 to 12 years have vacancies, but to close these institutions now and for this reason only, in the light of potential future need, would be unwise. Judging by the facts from only one community agency, of course, would also be unsound. We should correlate the findings with all the other known facts in the community in order to make a sound judgment.

Statistical facts will also help to determine whether a specific agency is being properly used by other social agencies as a community resource. For example, let us assume that a certain medical agency consistently refers to the family agency families that must then be referred elsewhere for service. A great deal of time could be saved if we took the responsibility for discussing with the referring agency these inappropriate referrals. Not only would this mean a future saving of valuable casework time, but it should result in much better service to the individual client.

Knowledge and understanding of facts in relation to requests for agency service lead to more efficient management. For example, what casework specialists should be hired? What new co-operative programs should be initiated, with which other agencies, to serve what particular needs? Continued tabulation of specific materials, which may be gathered from statistical cards, gives quick and easy access to data needed in planning shifts in program or in identifying new types of requests made by the community.

For agencies in cities where the community chest is already using IBM tabulation methods, it may be relatively simple to use these methods for tabulation of service statistics if such agencies can spend staff time in classifying the material and working out the many details that are necessary in using this specialized method. Because I believe that the use of statistical material is an unexplored field with many potentials, I was pleased to notice that the University of Chicago recently offered a course entitled Preparation of Statistical Material for Administrative and Community Use.

Case Records

Now let us turn to the case record, the type of social agency record on which the greatest amount of time is spent. Gordon Hamilton states: "The professional record is the worker's tool. No mere reproduction of facts, no matter how detailed or discriminating, can be substituted for the worker's thinking—a professional opinion—his own or shared with supervisor, consultant, or as the product of staff conferences."¹ This statement is accepted as valid, I believe, by most practitioners in the casework field.

Social agencies spend thousands of expensive man-hours each day in recording case material, which may or may not be used. Administrative staff is concerned with the most efficient use of the caseworker's time and with the preservation of the caseworker's valuable skills for service to the client. It is appropriate, therefore, that the matter of case recording be reviewed and some questions asked about current practices.

There is general agreement that the purpose of the case record is to further professional service to the client. Throughout the years we have accumulated voluminous records which were necessary while we were learning technical skills, but which have now outlived their usefulness.

Many purposes of a case record have been listed: for supervision and training, evaluation, self-study, research, teaching, and the protection of the agency. We have stressed the importance of these purposes and have given little thought to whether one record could possibly serve all of them. Another point to consider is the effect of case record production on agency operation.

In the past, agencies tended to include all possible material in the case record because it might have some future usefulness. This resulted in the accumulation of records that were long, detailed accounts of events and facts, written in a wordy style. They were repetitious and cumbersome, time-consuming for the case supervisor, and expensive in terms of the clerical staff time used to produce them and of the storage space needed to keep them.

¹ Gordon Hamilton, *Theory and Practice of Social Casework* (2d ed., rev.), Columbia University Press, New York, 1951, p. 137.

Today the only practitioners who are still writing records of this kind are new staff members, students in training, or those who are so unsure of themselves that for their own protection they continue to write in great detail. In situations in which agency administrators have not given leadership in encouraging the development of shorter records, the caseworkers themselves have tended to handle the matter by dictating a short summary, or by showing their resistance through postponing dictation.

Most social agencies employ a case supervisor who is charged with the responsibilities of supervision, training, and evaluation of the casework staff. In carrying out these responsibilities, supervisors have found the workers' records a most useful device. At times the reading of long, detailed material may have given the supervisor confidence that the staff was performing its tasks in a satisfactory manner. But in actual practice a supervisory conference involves the discussion of a great deal of additional material that did not seem important to the worker when he dictated the record. Furthermore, all supervisors, at one time or another, have had to confer with workers without the benefit of a case record, and I doubt that these conferences have always been ineffective.

The case record plays only a small part in the evaluation of a worker. The caseworker's ability to express himself on paper and to record well does not necessarily indicate a high degree of competence and skill in casework. I would not entirely discount the use of the case record in staff evaluation, but the primary consideration is its usefulness to the caseworker in his work.

Serious complications arise when attempts are made to use the case record for research purposes. The written material that caseworkers produce is based on knowledge, experience, and observation, but it tends to be diffuse. Moreover, criteria for determining what should be recorded are not well formulated. Although narrative records can be used for research, the two disciplines of casework and research must agree on what can be studied, and on the method of study. Making case records usable for research may even require the production of records particularly designed for study purposes. With this approach the agency could then devote time and effort to the study of small segments of program or special problems without completely changing the method of recording for all its records.

We must be willing to break with tradition, to experiment, and to move forward. We need to set down in writing some of our basic agreements as to what should be included in all casework treatment records. I should like to make the following proposals related to casework recording of the treatment of personal maladjustments.

Assuming that the narrative record can and should be very simple, it should include factual data pertaining to the client's significant history, why he came to the agency, what he has done about his difficulty so far, and what has motivated him to work on his present situation. It should also include information about the family constellation and the place of the family in the community, particularly in relation to work, school, and friends; evaluation of the use that the client makes of himself in relation to the caseworker; and the caseworker's description of future treatment steps.

Subsequent formal dictation on a case would include primarily the significant changes that occurred in the situation. The form of notes to be made would be left to the discretion of each staff member. This may be an extreme recommendation but is probably more realistic than our present requirements. For the agency where many disciplines use the same information, more rigid devices may need to be developed.

Public agencies are conducting interesting experiments in the use of forms.² The Maryland Department of Public Welfare, after the purpose of the agency had been studied and its function had been clarified, recommended that brief forms be used in place of long records. The advantages of uniformity, economy of space, time, and materials, flexibility for current use, brevity through selection of pertinent material, use of written explanation when needed for clarification, prompted the agency to adopt these forms in place of the traditional narrative records. Whether or not the use of forms will become acceptable to the social work profession, it does have the advantage of making available in one spot important information that is uniformly recorded and that is essential in carrying out agency program. If forms are not to become too routinized, the profession

² Bureau of Public Assistance, Social Security Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, *Current Practices in Staff Training VIII, Process in the Development and Teaching of a Policy on Case Recording*, Washington, D. C., November, 1952.

will need to experiment in developing the particular recording methods that are appropriate to each program.

Record Control

What has the National Records Management Council proposed that can serve as a guide to us? It has suggested that the most effective way of lowering paper work costs is to prevent unnecessary papers from coming into being, through a rigid system of forms control. Individual agencies have made spasmodic efforts in this direction. A few examples of the curtailment are: the use of wire recorders; dictation of brief contacts on plastic discs with transcription not completed until the record is needed, either for future service for the client or for specific study purposes; recording identifying information only on those situations where, at the time of the first interview, the client decides not to return. These and related efforts seem to have been made out of necessity, and only time and continued experimentation with such efforts will determine the soundness of the decision. Unfortunately, these efforts are still too few in number to form a basis for judgment about their ultimate value.

Attention has been given, however, to various forms of summarized recording. This type of recording has resulted in a reduction in repetitiousness which has notably reduced the size of records.

Systematic disposal of records, particularly of case records that are no longer of value to the agency and community, has received increasing attention. A study conducted by the Community Service Society of New York³ indicates clearly that records decline in usefulness with the passage of time. When to destroy, to summarize, or to microfilm are not easy matters to determine. The decision to microfilm is of particular gravity because of the expense involved.

Today there is general agreement that our method of record keeping is outdated; that we are following procedures that our present skill and knowledge have made invalid. We are making spasmodic efforts to modify the old methods and, in some instances, to try new ones. These efforts are laudable, but as professional workers we

³ Leonard S. Kogan and Benjamin Brown, "A Two Year Study of the Uses of Family Service Case Records: May 1951-1953," Institute of Welfare Research, Community Service Society of New York, November, 1953 (mimeographed).

ADMINISTRATION, SUPERVISION, AND CONSULTATION

must study this expensive, time-consuming procedure in a much more scientific manner. This can be done only if administrators encourage experimentation, if supervisors take responsibility, and if caseworkers are willing to participate. There must also be a change in the teaching of recording in our schools of social work. Collaborative research between the specialist in social work and the specialist in research is needed if case records are to be made effective for the purposes for which they are produced.

ARE WE GEARED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERS IN SOCIAL WORK?

Sophia M. Robison

THE SEARCH for leaders is a nation-wide problem—in government, in industry, in education, and in social work. The recurring questions are, where are the potential leaders and how can we effectively fill the key positions as they become vacant?

This paper examines the contribution of schools of social work to the persistent demand for leaders. For the purposes of this inquiry, we shall disregard the manipulating leader, concerned more often with his own goals than he is with those of the group which he purports to lead. This type of leader sometimes operates out in front but almost as often behind the scenes.

Porter Lee once identified two quite distinct types of leadership in social work: (1) the executive or directing type, concerned with doing; and (2) the enabling type—the preferred one in social work. In casework, the social worker as an enabler helps the client to develop his own potentialities to the maximum. In group work, the professional leader as enabler seeks the growth and development of the individual through the group experience, ultimately in the interest of general welfare. And in community organization, according to Lindeman, the ecological unit is the base from which the community's welfare is sought through the enabling activity of the generically trained social worker.¹

¹ Eduard C. Lindeman, "Social Casework Matures in a Confused World," *The Compass*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2 (1947), pp. 3-9.

There are three distinct areas of leadership for social workers: in developing professional theory, administration within the agency structure, and the general community. If one asks, who are the leaders in social work today, nine times out of ten the list will include the names of persons almost all of whom are formulating theories of practice. In group work as in casework theory, preoccupation with process and techniques appears to overshadow concern with content and program. The field of community organization provides examples of social work leadership—most often, however, under sectarian auspices.

Social work leadership, in the action sense, is found in such minority groups as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League, the American Jewish Committee, and the American Jewish Congress—organizations in which trained social workers have given outstanding leadership, both enabling and executive. There is only a handful of social workers on either the national or international scene, however, in positions which require extensive experience, training, and equipment.

Selection of Candidates for Schools of Social Work

In some quarters it has been suggested that the conspicuous absence of leaders in social work among the graduates of schools of social work, both in the general community and for top administrative positions, is due to the selection process governing admission to the schools. The important qualifications for the social worker are listed in *Social Work as a Profession*, a bulletin of the Council on Social Work Education,² as follows:

1. An interest in people.
2. Tolerance and flexibility as a basis of developing a non-judgmental approach. Since the capacity for relating positively to others, the nub of social work practice, is born of one's own life experience, schools of social work seek candidates who have had satisfactory family and community relationships.
3. Better than average intellectual ability, since the good social worker must be able not only to relate to people but to think

² *Social Work as a Profession*, published by the National Committee on Social Work in Defense Mobilization for the Council on Social Work Education, New York, 1953, p. 9.

clearly and to weigh evidence. Lindeman has listed as one of the measures of a profession's maturity its ability to attract its share of undergraduates of superior intelligence. "We should make sure," he says, "that it is intelligence imbued with deep-seated humanistic emotion. . . . A genuine social worker should be able to say with sincerity: 'I am involved in mankind.' This sense of fidelity to humanity's cause may be a derivative of religion, of humanism, or of socially-oriented science but it cannot be absent if the social worker is to possess that form of courage which makes for persistence and that variety of devotion which is an attribute of faith."³

4. An intelligent interest in social issues, and a concern about social problems. In expanding on this last-named prerequisite the Council bulletin⁴ comments that young men and women are needed in social work "who are offended by inequality of opportunity, who suffer at the sight of injustice." While not all who enter the profession will have the opportunity or the desire to seek great social reform, "the challenge is there for those who wish to meet it. . . . Social work has always been and probably will long remain a profession with ample scope for pioneers."

Among the surface reasons why schools of social work do not appear to be producing a record crop of leaders, it has been suggested that the profession has low prestige value. What is the evidence on this point?

Schools of social work, like schools of nursing and of teaching, still attract many more women than men. The predominance of women in social work, at least at the practitioner level, contrasts markedly with such professions as medicine and banking. Further, in American society, low prestige is associated with low financial return, which in turn is a function of the wage or salaried employee in contrast to the self-employed entrepreneur. Aside from these low prestige values—which did not operate in the days of the early leaders who were usually members of the class which supported the services—there are the challenges in the contradictions between the basically Protestant orientation of American culture and the social work philosophy.

³ Lindeman, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

⁴ *Social Work as a Profession*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

Following the tradition of Max Weber, many writers have pointed out the connection between the rise of capitalism, the Protestant ethic, and the democratic state. Training for social work is a legitimate American offspring of the Protestant concept of respect for the individual—the first article of faith in the social worker's creed. The doctrine of salvation through works, which stresses the importance of exploiting rather than wasting resources, has its social work counterpart in the concern for developing the potentialities of each individual. This major emphasis on the importance of the individual and the development of his potentialities is underscored by the concept of his right to be an individual and to pursue his own ends until they come in violent conflict with the group.

The stress on the dignity of work and on the importance of thrift has contributed to the development of what Giddings has called "the preferred American ideal type—the successful business man." This ideal today permeates the professions as well as business. The mark of a lawyer's, a doctor's, a columnist's, and even a minister's success is the amount that he earns.

As Bisno and others have pointed out, the acquisition of money, with its accompanying status in American society, undergirds the efforts to preserve the status quo.⁵ Social work, under voluntary auspices, is directed and largely supported by successful business men.⁶ Social agency employees are therefore often under considerable pressure to identify with the goals and standards of its supporters. These goals may differ from those of the clients.

While, then, there are some problems in attracting potential leaders to a profession dominated by women, characterized by comparatively low pay and employee rather than entrepreneur status, there is in itself nothing in the description of attributes of candidates for training which would preclude the development of leaders. Does the explanation perhaps lie in the aim of the program of the schools of social work, in the interests of their faculties, in the cur-

⁵ Herbert Bisno, *The Philosophy of Social Work*, Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C., 1952.

⁶ See Demetrius Iatridis' forthcoming doctoral dissertation on leadership for the Community Chest of Philadelphia. Carola Woerishoffer Graduate Department of Social Economy and Social Research, Bryn Mawr College.

rent emphases in training, alone or in combination? These will be discussed below.

According to a New York School of Social Work memorandum of April, 1954, the purpose of the Master's degree program is preparation for the *practice of social work, for the real jobs in the real world*:

We expect the graduate to be well oriented for the practice of social work, to have knowledge and understanding requisite to the practice of social work, to have skill in at least one area of practice, to have developed some professional attitudes and professional philosophy. It is recognized that not all students have potentialities for leadership, but if they have, the aptitudes and capacities are to be ascertained for this as well as for specific practices.⁷

The goal of the *advanced* study program, according to this memorandum, is the development of *leaders* in the field of social work. A cursory review, however, of the interests of the majority of the thirty-odd candidates who have enrolled in the School for the advanced degree since its inception four years ago suggests that the leadership envisaged is neither in the field of social action nor in administration. Possibly some of the doctoral candidates in other schools of social work are interested in training for social action; one would hope so.

It has been suggested that no school can train for leadership, and that leadership must grow out of practice. But isn't practice the test of all our theory? How do we know we can't train for leadership until we try?

Social Action As an Area of Social Work Practice

The explanations for our failure to produce leaders cannot be that we do not theoretically consider social action and administration as legitimate fields for social work. Quoting several authorities in the various fields of theory and practice, we find Gordon Hamilton saying:

When the social worker turns to the forces of community or government to achieve his objectives, rather than relying on individual initiative or voluntary group processes, we think of this as social action. . . . Social action may be thought of as an occupational field, as in associations for social legislation, or it

⁷ Memo from the Curriculum Committee, New York School of Social Work, April, 1954.

may be thought of as an essential counterpart of all community organization, social group work or social case work programs.⁸

According to Grace Coyle, social action is collective action by a group directed toward some social or societal end. It is not, however, coexistent with all group work.⁹

And Eduard Lindeman has written:

*The maturity of a profession may also be measured in terms of social responsibility. It is not enough to know that a profession serves its clients effectively. The public has the right to ask: do the members of the profession also seek the common good? . . . the welfare of the nation and not merely the advancement of the profession?*¹⁰

But perhaps the reader will say, all well and good; we acknowledge social action as appropriate in the community organization field. We look askance, however, at individuals who feel compelled to participate in social action outside of our professional organizations. Some of you no doubt remember discussions of areas of competence of the social worker as related to the appropriateness of participation in social action. A clarion answer, in my opinion, is that of Dean Youngdahl in his address at the meeting of the American Association of Schools of Social Work in Chicago in January, 1947. A social worker, regardless of the particular form of his practice, says Youngdahl, who retreats into professional skills is the *antithesis of the true professional who must be actively and effectively engaged as a citizen as well.*¹¹

In classifying the social worker's participation as a citizen, Youngdahl sees four types: (1) the myopic person whose end interest is in mechanics and techniques; emphasis on the individual approach to human problems precludes for him even a glimpse of the larger and broader problems of human relations; (2) the "fence rider"—the shilly-shally person who avoids controversy; he runs away from problems but toward victorious candidates; (3) the propagandist—the astigmatic type who believes the end justifies the means; he is for

⁸ Gordon Hamilton, *Theory and Practice of Social Case Work* (1st ed.), Columbia University Press, New York, 1940, pp. 7-8.

⁹ Grace Coyle, "Education for Social Action," *New Trends in Group Work* (Joshua Lieberman, ed.), Association Press, New York, 1938, pp. 1-14.

¹⁰ Lindeman, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

¹¹ Benjamin Youngdahl, "Social Workers: Stand Up and Be Counted," *The Compass*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 3 (1947), pp. 21-24.

free speech for *his* side only; and (4) the mature liberal—prudent, judicious, willing to admit arguments against his case if they appear to use logic, fearless when he believes he is right.

With all this affirmation of social action as an appropriate field of social work and the duty of individual social workers as citizens, why are the schools of social work not developing leaders in social action? Is there a clue in the predominance of casework faculty from whose standpoint the dynamics of an individual's behavior, especially as understood in psychiatry, can hardly be overstressed?

And, too, isn't it easier to teach students who accept what is taught without too much resistance? Teachers have struggled and often paid good money to learn the psychiatric theories. But leadership usually implies coming to grips with the recognition of the need for change, even in what we teach, and especially in a civilization like ours based on science, technology, and industry.

Since an important aspect of the problem of developing leaders depends upon the faculty and the agency executives, it might be enlightening to apply Youngdahl's categories of citizen participation to them. How many play significant roles as citizens? Have they in large numbers joined forces with non-social-work organizations? Do they work for civil liberties, civil rights, better housing, wider citizen participation in voting, and economic democracy instead of economic autocracy?

It must be granted that, as employees, the professional social worker meets obstacles in assuming leadership roles in the field of social action which may be harder to face than earlier ones. Today, the concern on the part of boards of directors, and also of some agency executives, is lest staff members embarrass them by expressing or supporting unpopular political views.

Opposition to social work's philosophy has become much more effectively organized. It parallels the development and implementation of social welfare concepts as a function of centralized government. As a multi-billion dollar operation, the social welfare program is a potent threat to that portion of American society which regards the expansion of social security as inimical to its interests and goals. Because the opposition is well organized, with support in more than one quarter, social work leadership today may be more

hazardous than it was when the leader was so often a member of the "ruling class."

What, then, are the differences between the old concepts of leadership embodied in the pioneers and the new concepts taught in most schools of social work? It has been suggested that the pioneering leader was the person who thought *for* and did things *to* persons rather than with them. The emphasis in the old days was on action rather than technique.

Impeding Factors

With the emphasis on the need for self-awareness and understanding in the developing of the professional self, the social worker in training is constantly reminded of the necessity to distinguish his needs from those of his clients. Such discipline requires that the leader constantly examine his impulses and ideas to make certain that he is not just fulfilling his own needs.

If the resident forces are the redemptive forces, the client, the group, or the community has to *want* to act if action is to be effective and sustained. The social worker as a leader who superimposes his goals will not develop the individual's or group's capacities.¹² But skill in the implementation of these concepts takes time and self-discipline, both factors which can easily discourage or impede social action.

Some social workers suggest that the current emphasis on close and continuing supervision discourages the development of independent action. A unique aspect of social work theory and training is the central role of supervision. The character and content of supervision in social work is not primarily administrative, as it is in industry and education and medicine. Have we perhaps substituted for the so-called old shackles of fundamentalist doctrine or a sense of dedication some new ones of our own contriving which we label as more objective and more scientific? (Here we might make note of industry's new approach which encourages putting men on their own rather than keeping them tied to the apron strings of the man next higher up the ladder.) Should we now per-

¹² These concepts, borrowed from John Dewey's philosophy, as applied to progressive education, are consistent with the ideal of the leader in a democratic versus an authoritarian society.

haps ask more persistently, how much supervision, for whom, for how long? Do the schools of social work encourage graduates, who might be good prospects for the role, to pioneer; or do we always urge them to select posts in the well-established agency, which assures good supervision?

Agency Practices

The agency executive's opinion of the effect of a staff promotion on the efficiency of the agency's operation is a consideration which sometimes interferes with the advancement of a staff member to a position of leadership, either within the agency or in another agency in the community. It is easy to lose sight of long-range social goals and to concentrate on the smooth operation of a particular agency's machinery. Frequently, in seeking to fill an opening with more leadership status, an unknown person with "paper" qualifications will be given preference over a staff member who may not have had the orthodox preliminary experience. There is, on the other hand, the problem in reverse—the danger of promoting a person who does not want leadership. Sometimes higher salary is the reason why the social worker will accept the executive position when he may really prefer direct contact with the client. The remedy is hard to come by in a system in which money rewards do not parallel advancing skill on the same operational level.

Occasionally staff persons are precipitated into leadership without preparation. But leadership has to be earned; it cannot be bestowed. A recent article describes a program of the Toronto Jewish Community Council to increase the reservoir of potential community leaders. Reviewing what has happened to 33 leaders who were active in the 1937-38 financial campaign, they concluded that today the tendency is to pick leaders for the top jobs who may have had no previous experience in agency service. As a corrective, the agency has formed a group of about 50 young persons who are being trained for leadership by being assigned individual agency responsibility before they graduate to positions of community responsibility. The "elder statesmen" serve as sponsors who provide status, and the professionals as study guides in program content.

The author emphasizes that leadership develops from experience.¹³

Most social agencies have not been very imaginative in the development of criteria for leadership. In committee work, the usual process is to assign the job to the older and well-known person, often already burdened, rather than to suggest that a less well-known person be given the opportunity to serve and to test his capacity for leadership development. Here, too, a psychological fact is no doubt at work; there may be a tendency to limit the number of leaders and, *ipso facto*, the amount of competition. Of course, not all of this is planned or conscious.

If we are to develop potential leaders it should not, however, be by accident, but by design. We may learn here from industry. The J. C. Penney organization, for example, credits an executive with proper performance on his job only when he has succeeded in training someone to take his place—surely an enabling role. The manager of each store is thus made personally responsible for developing someone to replace him or to take over another store.

The problem of discovering the person who is really ready for leadership is complicated by our lack of yardsticks for evaluating capacity in terms other than performance on a job. How can we make reasonably sure that past performance will carry over into situations which call for new experience? In this area industry has a good deal to contribute. A recent article in the *Reader's Digest* describes the experience of several of the big companies with management problems. Monsanto Chemical, Johnson and Johnson, Inland Steel, are cited as looking for persons who have liberal arts rather than technical training, and who are interested in even broader education. The necessary training is given on the job.¹⁴ It is interesting that, with goals of maximum production, industry should be looking for leadership among persons who are not necessarily technically trained.

In the opinion of the management of General Electric, young people today are often unwilling to take chances, to make decisions, or to accept responsibility. Most of their young employees, they

¹³ Florence Hutner, "Professional Responsibility for Leadership Development," *Jewish Social Service Quarterly*, Vol. XXX, No. 3 (1954), pp. 239-241.

¹⁴ Bill Davidson, "Are You the Executive Type?" *Reader's Digest*, April, 1954.

say, just want to keep out of trouble, but such persons are not the stuff out of which leaders are made. An appraisal form used in considering promotion by this company seeks answers to such questions as: Can people depend on what the candidate says? Does he have the courage to speak out against public opinion or higher authority, if convinced he is right? Is he willing to admit that he is wrong? Does he invite suggestions and encourage participation of his men on broad problems? Does he seek responsibility? Can he tactfully take issue with a point of view without becoming antagonistic?

Many of these questions would be perfectly appropriate in a social agency's appraisal of candidates for promotion.

One of the marks of a good executive is willingness to take responsibility for his subordinate's errors. This means taking calculated risks with the inexperienced person. Such support from the executive helps the leader-in-training to be willing to act on his own and so develop his capacity to do so. One social work executive used to permit the staff to sign her name without first reviewing the correspondence. In many agencies, however, no piece of mail goes out without prior review in the top office—a practice which surely does not develop capacity for decision-making and for action.

The current teamwork in some social agencies of psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, and other professional representatives should offer opportunity to develop leadership potentialities, as should group dynamic techniques.

Many young graduates of social work schools appear to be satisfied to do what they believe is a competent nine-to-five job, five days a week. Some look askance at the person who works in the community after hours. But as one social work leader remarked, what is wrong with having one's profession his hobby also? Are we so sure that without concern for social action we have truly good practitioners?

Implications for Curriculum Planning

Dean Youngdahl suggests that social workers need to have more than methodological skills, which in the past few years have been the hallmark of the trained social worker's educational back-

ground.¹⁵ In discussions of curriculum revision, there is talk of the need for more understanding of the sociological and economic concepts. We need to be more aware of the increasing class structure of the American urban population and, as a consequence, re-examine the basis of the assumptions and the hypotheses on which we have operated.

Should we re-examine our current concept of adjustment, based so largely on our preoccupation with the techniques developed by psychoanalysis in the treatment of neurotics produced by the middle-class bourgeois Viennese and American society? Does emphasis on the adjustment of the individual to the society block consideration of changes in the society which will make the individual's adjustment easier?

Should we not be concerned to give more than lip service in applying the social work principle that the resident forces are the redemptive forces, in assisting clients to act for themselves and to mobilize in their own interests? If it is acceptable for medical associations and bar associations to lobby, why not for client and tenant groups? While obviously there is a marked difference in the access to support, the principle should be the same. In a democratic society, there is need for leaders who will use their aggressive drives constructively for the welfare of the client, the group, and the community rather than to fulfil their own needs.

Was Lindeman right in his prediction that social action will become an integral part of the profession's obligation when our profession casts off the current timidity which so largely constrains its interests to the narrow sphere of its technical operations?

¹⁵ Youngdahl, *op. cit.*

BOARD MEMBERSHIP: INVENTORY AND OPPORTUNITY

Clarice H. L. Pennock

I SHOULD LIKE to call attention to two recent pieces of material dealing with the responsibilities and activities of board members. The first of these is a pamphlet issued early in 1954,¹ and the second is a study, not yet published, undertaken by the research staff of Community Chests and Councils of America.²

The pamphlet, *First on the Agenda*, was in preparation for three years. A committee of professional social workers and volunteers, all of whom are experienced in board member education, worked long and hard to produce this guidebook, which is described in the introduction as "a useful tool for study and discussion." It is a complete and very sound exposition of good practice. In my discussion of it I shall try to outline certain desirable practices that it advocates. I shall also bring to your attention actual practices, as described in the study.

Recommended Board Practices

Let us begin with the *fact* of the board itself and what it is responsible for, legally and morally. Two definitions of a board are

¹ *First on the Agenda, A Guide for Boards of Voluntary Agencies*, Advisory Committee on Citizen Participation of Community Chests and Councils of America and the National Social Welfare Assembly, New York, 1954.

² Two reports will be published: (1) *Boards and Board Members, Part I, Community Chests, United Funds, and Community Welfare Councils*; (2) *Boards and Board Members, Part II, Agencies* (Titles tentative).

offered in *First on the Agenda*: The board exists "To manage the business and properties of the corporation or association" or "To establish as incorporators and perpetuate as their successors the legal or corporate existence of the agency. To give broad continuity to the work of the agency and the community's interest in it, in the light of the inevitable changes among the individuals who serve as board or staff members, or as executive." Either definition is admirably suitable, since volunteer board members manage a privately supported health and welfare business that grosses over four hundred million dollars in the United States annually. Currently the goal of Red Feather agencies alone is nearly three hundred millions. To that figure must be added the heart and cancer campaigns, the March of Dimes, the Christmas and Easter sales of seals, the Red Cross, and various sectarian drives. All these are conducted on the national level. Locally, with the exception of those communities in which the chest is in fact a central collection and distribution agency with the support of all groups, and really discourages solicitations, there are additional appeals for financial aid—from the demonstration child guidance clinic, from the planned parenthood group, and countless others. Indeed, private agencies are big business, and they are managed by volunteer boards of directors who make their policies and agonize over their budgets. These boards are responsible for the legal and corporate existence of the agencies.

In addition to the volunteer groups there are the public agencies which have a tidy budget running into billions of dollars for health and welfare, and for security in the sense of old-age and unemployment security. They usually have advisory boards that are not legally but morally responsible. The phrase "promote the general welfare" in our Constitution is a meaningful one in terms of big business, as well as expressing a national ideal.

The management and direction of these numerous services fall largely to the lot of people like ourselves, run-of-the-mill individuals, professional career women, men who are earning the family living, club men and women, and those remarkable creatures, housewives. It has been said that when the Angel Gabriel blows his horn, a third of the American people will be on their way to a board meeting, a third present at one, and a third on their way home. "In a democracy

it is not essential nor even desirable that citizens should agree," wrote Eduard Lindeman, "but it is imperative that they should participate." And so they do—many thousands of them on boards.

Now, we may ask, what kinds of people are wanted as board members? Roughly speaking, we want people old and experienced enough to make wise choices, yet young enough to be enthusiastic about new methods and not afraid of change. We want people with enough free time to come to board and committee meetings, yet we do not want people who have so much time that we suspect they are not in demand. We want people whose minds are sharp and alert, but we do not want them at the end of a long day when they are worn out by their professions and business and merely want to snooze comfortably through the board meeting. We want people whose hearts readily respond to need, yet we do not want the sentimental do-gooders, the Lady Bountifuls of yesterday. We want people who are sympathetic to the problems of the executive, yet we do not want mechanical rubber-stamps for all of his suggestions. We want agency-minded people, but not the kind who refuse to admit that their agency can be wrong. We must have people who can see agency needs in relation to total community needs.

We need the business man, the labor leader, the seasoned community work-horse, the recent newcomer, the promising volunteer, the wealthy citizen, and the young woman who must sometimes secretly wonder whether she should sit on the board in order to help make policy or should apply as a client for services. Again and again we protest loudly that we must have this cross section of the citizenry, and yet we thoughtlessly schedule meetings at hours when representatives of labor groups, or women with small children, cannot possibly attend, and often we hold expensive luncheon or dinner meetings that strain the pocketbooks of all.

Too often the same names appear on board after board. I myself believe that one person can do justice to no more than three. We see again and again the well-known interlocking directorates that are suspect in the business world.

Furthermore, many sociologists believe that the agency board is definitely a "middle-class phenomenon" and they express the opinion that our communities are so stratified that, to be on certain boards, a person must have a certain income, belong to a certain church, live

in a certain neighborhood, and so on. Perhaps they are right. In all honesty I am forced to admit, from my own observation, that in some circles it is fashionable to be on some boards and dowdy to be on others.

Continuing to draw up specifications, this pamphlet says: "A fundamental qualification for board membership should be the desire and ability on the part of the prospective member to contribute to the achievement of purposes of the agency." How many of us could recite verbatim the purposes of our agencies? "It is important therefore that board members be selected from a broad field, representative of the community or groups served by the agency, and diversified as to age and sex, occupational and educational interests, social and economic position, racial background and religious faith."

In spite of this, however, we often select for a board member list a name that is wanted on the stationery, or even on a check. Roy Sorenson in his timely book on *The Art of Board Membership*³ calls a spade a spade amusingly. He lists the following personality caricatures:

1. *The Stuffed Shirts.* People, not very interested, who refuse to get in very deep, yet prize their names on the letterheads and act outside as though they run the agency.

2. *The Rubber Stamps.* Those who assent to everything the executive or committees bring in, either because they don't want the bother of inquiry or because they are "yes men" for the executive.

3. *The Back-scratchers.* Members who play together and support one another's views and proposals. Also those who cater to those on the board whose approval they want.

4. *The Absentees.* Members seldom present.

5. *The Watch-in-hand.* The ones who usually arrive late and leave early.

6. *The Exclusive Set.* Those who tend to elect from their own small group, making the board an exclusive club conforming to a social pattern. They tend to vote together.

7. *The Usurpers.* One-man boards—a self-perpetuating, powerful group. Those who consider the agency theirs and on whom agency groups and the community exert little or no control.

8. *The Climbers.* People whose motive for serving is to increase social prestige by association with those of greater prestige and who never get genuinely interested in the agency or the work of the board.

³ Roy Sorenson, *The Art of Board Membership*, Association Press, New York, 1950, pp. 85-86.

9. *The One-Track Minds.* Those who seek to interject hobbies or obsessions into whatever subject is under discussion.

10. *The Zealots.* Members with excessive zeal for the growth and prosperity of the agency, and with little or no concern for the community as a whole.

11. *The Electrifiers.* Those who speak with such intense emotion that it is difficult for others to think and participate in the atmosphere of tension they create.

12. *The Hedgers.* Uneasy people who can't stand controversy and try to get rid of it by generalized solutions which evade, but do not settle, the problem.

Without being cynical, we must admit that we do see some people like these.

Next, I commend to your earnest attention the sections in the pamphlet on orientation and training of new members. It is excellent, sound material.

After discussing methods of selecting officers and fixing their duties, *First on the Agenda* moves on to board committees and takes up, in a very practical manner, the executive committee and the five usual standing committees: nominating, budget, finance, personnel, and public relations.

I should like first to put the spotlight on the most important one, the nominating committee. In the pamphlet there is an amusing cartoon depicting the nominating committee in a state of panic, no doubt wondering a few days before the annual meeting whom to invite to be on the board—one of those nominating committees that meet only in crises instead of functioning the year round. The chances are that one member will make a few hurried telephone calls running something like this: "Will you be on our board of directors? It's only for a three-year term. You won't have to do a thing except come to a few meetings a year—none in the summer. Now don't say 'no'; we need your name—and of course you too—for as much time as you can conveniently give, but we won't hold it against you if you miss a meeting now and then. . . ." I hope that I am exaggerating, but I am afraid there is more truth than we care to admit in the method I've just outlined.

How can a board be vital if the choice of membership is left to an offhand effort at the last moment, in order to meet a deadline? *First on the Agenda* says that the nominating committee has a "rare opportunity." This is an understatement. The nominating committee holds the key to the success of the board, and it should

conduct a year-round search for good members. We should remember to ask the jaded businessman who will get a fine busman's holiday by serving on the budget committee of the board. Remember to ask the busy housewife who will enjoy leaving home for a solid civic job. Ask young people. Nowadays, relatively few young people are getting the experience that will enable them to fill the shoes of their mothers and grandmothers—able women who have had more household help and who have given intelligent and generous service to their communities. It is indeed true that though we want and need these young people, many of them have their hands so full of family duties they are too tired and exhausted to perform civic duties. There does seem to be a definitely best time in one's life for these activities, or at least a most practical time, and that is after the children have reached school age. However, unless one has had earlier training it's hard to emerge fullblown, in middle age, as a capable board member. This definitely presents a dilemma. But we should ask these young people—or at least keep an eye on them and put their names in the file.

Next in importance to the nominating committee is, in my opinion, the personnel committee—the hire-and-fire committee, and often, if you please, the staff-understanding-and-support committee. Of course one can carry support beyond reason but, by and large, the personnel committee has the duty to interpret staff to board and vice versa. Unfortunately there is sometimes much too much interpretation to be done. It is always surprising to me to realize how many board members tend to think of themselves in one camp and of the staff in another. It almost seems as if there were an inevitable and natural antagonism between the two camps, and no state of affairs is more to be deplored.

Let me tell you part of what is said in the pamphlet about the duties of the personnel committee.

The personnel committee has the duty:

To work out all questions of board and staff relationships; to secure an adequately trained executive and make periodic evaluations of his work; to confirm the executive's selections for important staff positions after review of qualifications; to consult with the executive on difficult personnel problems; to review resignations and dismissals; to provide for grievance procedures for staff wishing to appeal an administrative decision involving personnel practices.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

To discharge these broad functions, the agency should develop specific personnel policies and practices for professional and clerical staff which are recorded, reviewed, and amended from time to time by board action.

This is followed by statements on conditions of employment; job classifications and salary ranges; working hours; vacations; leaves; health and welfare; reimbursable expenses; staff meetings; evaluations; promotions; and finally, termination of employment, severance pay, and grievance procedures. I am reminded of the nominating committee's query: "Will you serve on our board? It will take only a little of your time." It does not seem to apply to this committee. Yet the personnel committee is a fascinating committee on which to serve, since it holds in its hands the effectiveness of the agency's day-to-day work in terms of the quality of staff performance. What could be more important?

I shall not discuss at this time the other committees of the board. May I commend *First on the Agenda* to you as a practical, thoughtful, yet inexpensive guide.

Actual Board Practices

Now we come to the other side of the coin, the realities in so far as we know them.

Realizing that our theories had been articulated, but that our practices were relatively unknown, Community Chests and Councils of America undertook about a year ago to study boards through two questionnaires, one for local voluntary agencies and one for local public agencies. These were sent to member chests and councils which were asked to circulate them to member and non-member voluntary and public agencies. To date a total of 2,223 boards have reported through their chests or councils in 57 cities and one county. They represent a cross section of the country from Maine to California and include communities ranging in population from under 100,000 to 200,000 and over. More data will be tabulated in time.

The facts I am presenting here have only recently been ascertained. They pertain only to data secured from the questionnaires submitted by 691 agencies in the 31 cities that had at least 90 per cent of their chest-affiliated boards reporting. This represents about 45 per cent of all such boards in the study. The replies showed that 78 per cent

of the agencies have a governing board, and 22 per cent an advisory or other type of board. These statistics validate our first theoretical point—that boards do, in fact, exist.

Of the agencies studied, 65 per cent stated that new board members are selected at membership meetings, from slates prepared, in 84 per cent of the cases, by nominating committees. Additional nominations were permitted in 70 per cent of the agencies but there was no indication whether or not additional nominations were actually made. "Permitted" is the key word. Moreover, 58 per cent of the nominating committees were appointed by the board and an additional 21 per cent by the president or chairman of the board. In 22 per cent of the boards, nominating committees were elected by the membership, but the election method was not outlined. From these figures it is evident that some boards used more than one method.

I am not seeking to undermine your confidence in *all* nominating committees, but I definitely want to suggest that they should take their jobs seriously, and sleep with a copy of *Agenda* under their pillows.

Turning next to the number of board meetings held per year, we find that 59 per cent of the voluntary agencies hold ten or more, an additional 11 per cent hold nine, and the balance of 30 per cent less than nine a year.

Now we come to some fascinating material having to do with the length of time present board members have served continuously. It is not as bad as you might think; there are not as many vested-interest board members as we feared. Forty-four per cent have served less than three years and 23 per cent between three and five years. The combined total of 67 per cent gives evidence of considerable change and turnover and seems to prove that rotation is really practiced. It appears, at least on the basis of the tabulations made to date, that there are not as many entrenched board members serving years and years as some of our critical colleagues suggest. Sixty-six per cent of the replies indicated that there was no limitation on the number of successive terms board members may serve. However, although there was no limitation set in the by-laws, the figures suggest that something was operating to hold the terms of the vast majority of board members to five years or less.

On attendance at board meetings, roughly one-fourth of the boards reported attendance by 50 to 59 per cent of the members; a second fourth reported 60 to 70 per cent, and the remaining half were equally divided between under 50 and over 70 per cent. In other words, three-fourths of the boards had, on the average, at least half of their members present at meetings, while the remaining one-fourth had less than half. However, there are many factors that may have been operating to keep these people from attending. We do not know why they stayed away. For statistics on attendance to mean much we need to have much more detailed and specific information. For example, who were absent most frequently—business and professional members, labor representatives, housewives? At which meetings were they absent—morning, luncheon, late afternoon, or evening meetings? One thing, however, is certain: 6 per cent of the board members who were included in the study attended no meeting whatever.

Some of the findings confirm the opinions of the sociologists, and should give the rest of us pause for thought: 94 per cent of these voluntary agency board members are white, and only 6 per cent are non-white. I can feel only chagrin over this, since the national population distribution is 89 per cent white and 11 per cent non-white.

A surprising percentage of these board members are male—62 per cent. Of the boards reporting, 48 per cent said that their members were between the ages of 45 and 60, whereas the national age distribution indicates that only 25 per cent of our population is between 45 and 60. An age bracket that includes one-quarter of our population contributes nearly one-half of our board members.

The limited number of statistics I have quoted refers only to the voluntary agencies that are members of local chests. Reports were received also from non-chest voluntary agencies and from public agencies. The full study will be published by Community Chests and Councils of America and will undoubtedly prove a valuable and significant contribution.

Conclusion

Thus we have the two pictures: one of recommended practice and the other of actual practice. Fortunately there are not too many

dissimilarities, and not many changes need to be made to bring the two into harmony, especially if we work at it and believe in our commitments.

I have tried to outline the magnitude and dignity of the board member's job. In closing I should like to quote Eduard Lindeman again (from a booklet prepared for the Volunteer Personnel Committee of the YWCA):

"It is difficult to imagine what American life minus its volunteers would be like, but one may make a few assumptions.

"Officials and professionals would, no doubt, continue to operate their respective institutions and agencies, at least for a time, but they would function in a lonely atmosphere. They would find themselves insulated from the true public and in touch with only that sector of the public which is represented by their constituents and clients. There would no longer be a life-line between their expertness and the experience of the people. The transmission belt which shuttles back and forth between Democracy on the one hand and Science on the other would stand idle. They, the professionals, would soon be obliged to devote large amounts of time and energy in securing funds for the maintenance of their work and assurance for their incomes. Public agencies would take on more and more of the coloration of bureaucracies. Private agencies would, I believe, gradually wither and die. And when private institutions no longer exist Democracy will have committed suicide. Totalitarian bureaucracies or dictatorships will take its place and freedom will disappear altogether.

"I wish I knew how to induce volunteers to appreciate the significant role they play in furnishing vitality to the democratic enterprise. They are to Democracy what circulation of the blood is to the organism. They keep Democracy alive. They epitomize freedom and are to our society what the Bill of Rights is to the Constitution which governs us. The health of a democratic society may be measured in terms of the quality of services rendered by citizens who act in 'obedience to the unenforceable.'

"The above phrase, 'obedience to the unenforceable,' was used in a memorable address delivered by Lord Moulton before the Authors' Club of London and later published in the *Atlantic Monthly*. 'We live,' said Lord Moulton, 'under the discipline of three domains: one, the positive law which prescribes rules of conduct and exacts

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

penalties for disobedience; two, the realm of free choice which is covered by no statutes; and three, that domain in which neither positive law nor free choice prevails. In this sphere the individual imposes obligations upon himself. In this realm the individual is not wholly free, since he has accepted a responsibility. Although he knows that no law and no individual may compel him to fulfil this commitment, he also knows that he cannot disobey without betraying himself. This is the domain in which the volunteer lives,' and as Lord Moulton concluded, 'the real greatness of a nation, its true civilization, is measured by the extent in the land of obedience to the unenforceable.'"

Many thousands of volunteer board members are so acting.

THE ROLE OF THE MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT IN THE SOCIAL WORK FIELD

Albert Pleydell

BECAUSE THERE ARE many similarities between the operations of a business firm and those of a social work agency, business men often conclude that there are no differences. So they often call for "economies," "balanced budgets," or "more efficiency" in the belief that administrative controls will magically resolve an agency's operational problems or its financial troubles. Such business men—many of whom are serving loyally and diligently on various agency boards—are sincerely bewildered when the magic fails.

Agencies Differ from Business

What's wrong? Why don't these tried and true business techniques work when they are applied to social work services? The answer is that they do work if they are properly applied. The point is that in applying them we have always to keep in mind not only the similarities between social work and business, but also the differences. Three of these differences are of particular importance:

1. *Greater efficiency makes profits in business; in social work it adds to cost.* In business it is usually true that an increase in efficiency results in greater profits. When a social agency becomes more efficient, costs may go up. Since demands for an agency's services are often far in excess of its ability to meet them, an increase in "efficiency" usually results in a demand for more service. It is a rare agency whose income grows faster than its program. It is true, in a sociological sense, that the increased efficiency has given the

community a greater profit, but it is not the kind of profit that shows up in black ink on a profit and loss statement.

2. *A business has to make a profit to stay in business; a social agency does not.* When a business loses money consistently, society permits it to be liquidated, via bankruptcy proceedings. Society expects a social agency, on the other hand, to lose money. In fact, it calls social agencies "non-profit" enterprises to emphasize this point. Society may penalize agencies that "make money" by revoking their tax-exempt status.

3. *Deficit financing, fatal to business, is often life-giving to agencies.* A budget is employed for various purposes; a major use of this administrative tool is to prevent deficits. In business, if losses are foreseen in a projected budget, costs may be radically slashed. Then, as the budget year moves on, efforts are constantly exerted to keep the budget in balance, which means—in business terms—to prevent a deficit.

An agency's budget is used for measuring the agency's program and operations and for guiding board and executive in policy determination. Often the budget is intentionally unbalanced. Income is shown to equal outgo on a balance sheet by the simple device of including the deficits as income. Deficits, which are anathema to business, are often a point of great strength to social agencies. Deficits per se are not bad. It's the *kind* of deficit that counts.

These fundamental differences between business and social work may suggest that there is no place in the social service field for the management—or business—consultant. But this is not true. On the contrary, there are many ways in which a consultant can be of real service to the social agency, providing he understands the needs and problems of its operation. A good business consultant can be helpful in every phase of an agency's activities, except in its purely professional services.

Areas of Agency Activity

The work of a social agency involves many activities, some professional and some administrative. The two overlap at points, and cannot always be sharply differentiated.

Professional work: Tradition has a great deal to do with the way any one agency delineates the responsibilities of its professional staff.

Duties regarded by one agency as "professional" may be called "clerical" by another agency. All too often, professional workers are overburdened with routine office details. As a result, their effectiveness is impaired and the agency program suffers.

Years of training and substantial sums of money are invested in preparing each professional worker for his career of service. Why should this investment be wasted on minor clerical chores that can be performed adequately by others? Filing, posting, writing long-hand reports, and routine correspondence are tasks that diminish the zeal of many a professional person. And let us not overlook the unscreened telephone calls or the misdirected visitors.

Relationships with board and community: Social agencies, in the main, are dependent upon their communities for the funds needed to carry on their services. Yet how few make any conscious, planned effort to win the year-round friendship and support of the community. Funds, obviously, are easier to raise from a public that knows about an agency—a community that has been kept acquainted with the agency's work. Good community relations call for sound planning and good organization. Many a good plan is spoiled by poorly organized supporting services.

The nature of the relationships between an agency's staff and its board is of paramount importance. It is not enough for the executive director to be on good personal terms with the board. There are numerous details connected with the activities of a board and its committees which call for good staff work on the part of agency personnel. The details of such board services are of great significance in determining the quality of board relationships.

Obtaining funds: The actual task of raising money is an all-important agency activity; without adequate financing, the agency's purposes cannot be realized.

General operations: In addition to the purely professional work, many social agencies engage in a wide variety of activities such as operating camps and bookstores, providing residence quarters and meals, managing farms, and merchandising. They also are involved in the maintenance and operation of buildings and grounds. Even though these activities are related to the professional area of an agency's work, they pose many problems similar to those encountered in business.

Records: Keeping office records is an expensive operation in most agencies, and one that is seldom as effective as it might be. The maintenance of membership records, for example, is vitally important to maintaining revenue. Yet it is not unusual to find systems that permit members to disappear from the rolls, to be billed twice, or sometimes not to be billed at all.

Much valuable time is wasted in searching for records or in reconstructing data that were not properly recorded initially. Valuable space and filing equipment are wasted in housing records that should either be destroyed, microfilmed, or at least transferred to less costly facilities.

Administration: It is a well-known fact that the total effectiveness of an enterprise or organization is not necessarily equal to the sum of the efforts of the various individuals who make it up. People can work together, each giving the job everything he has, and yet the net result can be disappointing. Why? Duplication of effort is one common reason. Overlapping of responsibility is another. Uncertainty or confusion over policies and procedures is still another. In other words, the administrative function is not being properly exercised.

Such a condition may be due to various causes. One of the most common is the single fact that relatively few agency executives have ever had special training as administrators. Another common cause is poor organization. Still another cause is board interference.

Methods and procedures: Efficient methods and procedures are as essential in a social agency as elsewhere. To achieve these does not necessarily mean investing in expensive equipment; sometimes manual methods are better and cheaper than mechanical ones. It does mean that the methods and procedures should be tailored to the needs of the individual agency. It is important to consider methods and procedures from an agency-wide point of view. A method that is effective within one department may cause bottlenecks or extra work in another department.

What a Management Consultant Can Offer

Candor: He can be frank with the board where staff members are often obliged to be circumspect lest their motives be suspected.

Objectivity: He can view the situation with detachment. His judgment is not prejudiced by reasons of self-interest. His viewpoint is completely objective. He is able to see the forest *and* the trees.

New concepts: Agencies, like people, get in ruts. Things are done in a certain way simply because they have always been done that way. Sometimes the old way is best; sometimes it is not. The consultant brings to the agency a fresh viewpoint. He challenges the status quo, not as an iconoclast, but as a person who endeavors to help the agency see itself objectively, and so be able properly to evaluate its practices.

Special skills: The normal operations of an agency call for certain skills on the part of its staff. But from time to time, new situations arise which require skills outside of those possessed by the staff. In such situations, a consultant can be most helpful in supplementing the staff's knowledge by his own special skills.

Understanding: The consultant should have a sympathetic understanding of what the agency is trying to do and should gear his efforts accordingly. His methods should be designed to get the work done with the least inconvenience to the agency staff. He is usually able to understand the misgivings, unfounded though they may be, which are sometimes felt by employees when an outsider is brought into an organization. He endeavors to co-operate with his client to allay such misgivings from the outset.

Liaison: In some agencies, each department is cut off from all others by veritable Chinese walls. Similarly, in a federation, chest, or council, agencies may be separated from one another by function, location, or other artificial division. In such circumstances, a consultant can serve as an effective liaison, and achieve a degree of coordination and co-operation unattainable by the regular staff.

Techniques: There are special techniques in management work, just as in other fields. Problems that seem vague or complicated to the agency's staff can often be quickly pinpointed and resolved by a consultant employing special techniques of problem identification, fact-finding, and analysis.

Allied experience: One of the most important assets of a consultant is the store of experience he can bring to each new situation. It is this background of related experience that often enables him to

offer suggestions quickly concerning problems that have vexed an agency for a long time. The agency's problems, although very special to the staff, may be, when stripped of distractions of place, people, and terminology, very like the problems the consultant has solved in other organizations.

New outlook: In working closely with the staff, the consultant can often improve morale by giving those with whom he works a new outlook on their jobs. He stimulates their interest in the overall operations of the agency and awakens a keener sense of each one's role in the total picture.

Teamwork: Regardless of the kind of service the consultant is rendering—conducting a preliminary fact-finding survey or an intensive study, guiding the staff in self-study, or counseling the agency on problems of policy—he works with the staff. He knows that the best results flow from good teamwork.

Summary

We have outlined seven areas of agency activity and ten ways in which the management consultant can be helpful in the administrative processes in social work. Because of his particular training and skills, the consultant can make an effective contribution to the total program of an agency.

Note: The above paper was accompanied by a flannel-board presentation on which the listing of the key points showed an interesting arrangement:

P rofessional work	C andor
R elationships	O bjectivity
O btaining funds	N ew concepts
G eneral operations	S pecial skills
R ecords	U nderstanding
A dministration	L iaison
M ethods	T echniques
	A llied experience
	N ew outlook
	T eamwork

CONSULTATION: SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES ¹

Doris Siegel

CONSULTATION is not new to social workers. For some time they have received consultation from psychiatrists and from various other professional persons with whom they have occasion to work. For many years social workers also have given consultation to members of other professions. Sometimes the social workers are called "consultants" and, although they may carry responsibility for other activities and use other processes, consultation has been clearly included in their responsibilities.

In both using and giving consultation, social workers have begun to analyze and understand the process involved in it. At the same time, they have recognized that the process of consultation is complex and that more thought, analysis, and research must take place in order to achieve definitiveness and clarity about it. Even so, I believe that there is value in attempting to look at consultation as social workers now know it. For this reason, I am glad of the opportunity to present some ideas on this subject, based on my own experience as a consultant in a hospital and in other health settings, which I believe may have applicability to other fields of social work.

Consultation Defined

What have been some of the definitions of consultation? Webster's dictionary defines consultation as the "act of consulting; meeting to exchange ideas or talk things over." To consult is de-

¹ The material in this paper was presented originally at a symposium on Social Work Practice in the Field of Tuberculosis at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work, July 27-August 1, 1953.

defined as "to seek information or advice from; exchange ideas; take into consideration; have regard for." In a general way, these definitions certainly contribute to our understanding of consultation. Consultation does involve seeking advice; it does necessitate talking things over; it does require having regard for. But the seeking of advice, the talking over, the regard for are directed at a purposeful discussion and at problem solving. Ideas are exchanged in this process and help is given.

Harriett Bartlett speaks of consultation as "a process of shared thinking that brings enlarged insight and increased ability to deal with the problem [brought for consultation] but leaves responsibility for decision and action with the persons seeking consultation." Miss Bartlett points out the purposefulness of consultation, and its "take it or leave it" quality.²

One workshop group, in considering medical social work consultation, came to the conclusion that consultation is "advisory services to other professional personnel to: enlarge and deepen their understanding of the social and emotional difficulties which, in the discharge of their special responsibilities, may be found to interfere with their efforts to help people achieve and maintain health; to help them deal more effectively with such factors in a way that will be appropriate to their function."³ In highlighting the purpose—the "why"—and the content—the "what"—of medical social consultation, this definition is good. In clarifying the "how," it is obviously limited.

Charlotte Towle defines consultation as a process "involving the giving and taking of help in an interpersonal relationship."⁴ A group Miss Towle led at the University of Chicago in 1951 formulated a definition of consultation as a process by which expert knowledge and skills are transmitted in a relationship between the

² Harriett M. Bartlett, "Consultation Regarding the Medical Social Program in a Hospital," in *Consultation: Two Papers Given at the Meeting of the American Association of Medical Social Workers*, New Orleans, La., May 12, 1942, George Banta Publishing Co., Menasha, Wis., p. 11.

³ "Consultation Process in Relation to Individual Cases," Report of Institute for Medical Social Instructors, offered by University of Illinois, Division of Services for Crippled Children, June 14-July 1, 1948, p. 51 (mimeographed).

⁴ Unpublished material by Charlotte Towle.

person consulted and the person seeking consultation, for the purpose of problem solving.

It seems to me that all these definitions, although they have some differences, have common elements—in consultation there is a purpose, there is a problem, and there is a process.

Perhaps these definitions can be drawn together in a meaningful way. Consultation is a way of giving advice and counsel to a person on a specific problem in a defined area—advice and counsel that he is free to accept or reject. Its purpose is to add to and enhance the knowledge and understanding of the person seeking help in order to solve a particular problem. The help is given through a professional relationship. Consultation does not involve the taking of help by the consultant and consequently is a two-way process only in the sense that any relationship operates two ways. Although a consultant may at some time seek consultation from a person to whom he has given consultation, he cannot simultaneously assume the role of a consultant and of a person asking consultation.

In consultation, the specialist works to advance a point of view, to emphasize an aspect of a job, by giving counsel to the person who is carrying the direct responsibility for action. This is in contrast to his *working directly with* a patient or client, a staff, or a community.

The giving of help through consultation is, of course, affected by the attitude of the person asking for help and his reaction to the ideas brought out. It is also influenced by the consultant's approach and reaction, and by the interaction between the two people involved. It is dependent, too, upon each person's understanding of his own role.

Problems, Purpose, and Focus

What is consultation in medical social work as it exists in practice? What kinds of problems are brought for consultation? What are the purpose and focus of consultation? What is the process used?

Medical social workers give consultation in relation both to program and to individual cases. Some of us work in agencies which, among other functions, have the responsibility for giving

consultation on many phases of a program including the medical-social aspects. These agencies, voluntary or public, operate on the state or national level; some are concerned with various diagnostic groups such as those dealing with tuberculosis, crippling conditions, or heart disease. Some of us work in hospitals which may be giving consultation to other hospitals or to other groups interested in health or medical care.

All these agencies are concerned that their program include consideration of social factors, that policies and procedures facilitate care and give recognition to each person's dignity and self-respect, that social services be available to those patients needing them. The medical social worker carries responsibility for giving consultation on problems arising in these areas of program development. He deals with such questions as: How will a policy regarding restricted visiting hours affect children in their relationships with their parents? How can continuity of care be furthered by better interchange of information between facilities and personnel? What factors need to be considered in determining eligibility for treatment services? What is the best organizational and staffing pattern for social service in a particular program? What should be the educational and experience requirements for staff? These and many other questions may be discussed by the medical social worker in the course of giving consultative service to the health officer, the medical director of a sanatorium, or a local medical social worker.

The problems brought for consultation on individual patients are just as many and varied. They run the wide range of problems arising out of the interrelatedness of the individual's social situation and his health and medical care, and may include resistance to such medical recommendations as entering a hospital, returning to a clinic, limiting activity; discharge from a hospital against advice; a mother's guilt reaction to a child's congenital defect; marital problems and frictions affecting family health; unreadiness to face pregnancy. Other social workers outside the health agency may need help in understanding how the medical situation influences the social situation. Requests for consultation on such problems are coming from various professional persons to medical social workers in public health and medical care programs, in voluntary health agencies as well as in hospitals.

The purpose and focus of consultation by medical social consultants are to help others in carrying out an activity, in developing a relationship with patients, and in setting up a plan. Consultation to other members of the health team is directed toward helping them to see the relatedness of social and emotional factors to medical factors and to deal with these in a way appropriate to their function. For other social workers outside the health agency, consultation is directed toward helping them to become more aware of medical factors, both as these affect and are affected by social situations, and to include such consideration in their casework service. Consultation to their own counterparts, the medical social workers in a state or local agency, is directed toward helping them strengthen the medical social aspects of their program in light of the existing situation and potentialities for development.

The Consultation Process

The process of consultation involves skills inherent in establishing and maintaining a good relationship with another person. The consultant starts where the other person is in terms both of his thinking and of his feeling. This method implies sensitivity on the part of the consultant to the person seeking consultation and an ability to assess his need for help and his feeling about taking it. It implies skill in helping another person state the problem with which he is struggling; it also means recognizing his need for this help and trying to meet it directly. It is easy to wander along a devious route in getting to a problem; the consultant would do well, I believe, in most instances to focus his help directly on the presented problem. But as he does this, he should not lose sight of the basic problem underlying it.

The consultant must recognize with the counselee the feelings the latter brings in seeking help. If consultation has been imposed, the consultant, by looking at this fact with him, sets the stage for a more helpful consultation. If the counselee feels that a problem defies any solution, the consultant, by acknowledging this with him, may ease any sense of failure or inadequacy.

The consultant must give acceptance and support to the person consulting him, and recognize and build on his strengths. Only as we help a person with what he needs—additional knowledge,

deepened understanding, possible alternatives of action—and give this help with a belief in his ability to use and integrate it, can we really perform a useful function. The consultant shows his understanding of how the other person feels by sympathetic listening, reassurance, sharing of frustration, easing of tension. He predicates what he does on a respect for the counselee and for his strengths.

As in any personal relationship, the attitudes of both the persons involved must be recognized as of importance. A worker may sometimes seek consultation not so much because he recognizes a need for it, but because of pressure to do so, either administrative or internal. He may react with hostility, anxiety, dependency, submission, or resistance. The consultant, in turn, may be insecure about the value of his help and its acceptance. As part of an administrative structure, he carries certain responsibilities for promoting a program and for raising standards of practice. He may represent the giver of funds as well as the giver of consultation. The pressure of his responsibilities may sometimes militate against his maintaining a "take it or leave it" attitude toward the person consulting him. Recognition of these and various other attitudes can help move consultation forward effectively.

Consultation, to be truly effective, must be paced to the needs of the counselee, both in amount and rate of help given. The consultant often may want to give a great deal because he knows he may not have another interview with the counselee for some time or because he is eager to see results quickly. If he succumbs to his own urgency, he can easily overburden the other person with too many ideas, suggestions, illustrations. The consultant must discipline himself to assess the requests for help and to evaluate how much he can give and how fast—or perhaps even more important, how slowly—it should be given.

If consultation is to achieve its objective of increased understanding and knowledge in a particular area, it must be directed toward moving from the specific to the general, toward drawing from the immediate situation applications to other related situations. Sheer repetition, of course, has value, and often a person may return for consultation on similar problems. Out of each situation, however, he should be able to carry over some principles, some ideas to be applied in other situations.

Consultation on Program

The discussion thus far has been chiefly on a theoretical level. Perhaps at this point we should examine some actual illustrations of consultation and determine, if we can, to what degree practice stacks up with theory.

In one situation, a medical social consultant from a federal agency came to visit a new state tuberculosis medical director, formerly a sanatorium director, who wished to discuss with her what to do about "recalcitrants." The director was very much concerned that so many patients with tuberculosis did not enter a sanatorium when such care was advised. He wondered if the solution lay in getting a compulsory hospitalization law and making it a felony if a person whose test showed positive sputum refused care. In this way, such a person could be sent to jail.

Agencies frequently receive requests for this type of consultation on program policy. This federal agency had medical social workers on its staff who were available for such discussions.

The particular request was certainly clear and concise. The medical social consultant recognized that it had been stimulated by the director's frustration. She knew also that he was moved by a sincere concern about what happens to patients who do not get medical care and about his responsibilities for controlling tuberculosis, and that he was seeking ways to solve these problems.

The medical social consultant had not been in this state previously but had developed a good relationship with the director in working with him in one of his previous positions. The consultant first asked how big the problem was. The director did not have definite information but believed that at least five out of every 100 patients fitted into such a "recalcitrant" classification. The consultant wondered whether there might be some value in analyzing the nature and extent of the problem. Were there more recalcitrants in one area of the state than in another? Were there any causative factors behind these differences in incidence if found? Would it be helpful to explore some of the reasons patients gave for not entering a sanatorium? The medical director agreed but wondered if a law such as he had in mind would not help, regardless of these factors.

The consultant pointed out some of the difficulties she could see in such a law. Would people be in danger of being labeled recalcitrant whether they were or not—such people as those who did not come in promptly, but intended to come; people who were not at home when the nurse visited; people who were reported because someone disliked them? Were there enough sanatoria for the care of all these patients?

The director thought these were valid questions, but still thought it might

be worth while to try to find out what would happen if patients with positive sputum were forced into sanatoria. The consultant asked whether the director really felt such enforcement ever accomplished anything. The director said he did not, of course, but thought it might be used as a threat so more persons would go to the sanatoria.

The consultant pointed out that this problem had arisen in other states, too, and in some instances some analysis had been made as to why people refused to follow advice. The director expressed interest in what other states had found. The consultant said there seemed to be an inverse relationship between the availability of social services and the number of recalcitrants. If people can have help with some of the social and emotional problems relating to the illness that they face, they often may not need to become recalcitrants. Perhaps the director might wish to think about this.

The consultant also commented on reactions to this kind of authority that she had observed. Some interesting material had been written on the emotional implications of authority and its use. Would the medical director be interested in seeing this? He thought he would be.

The purpose of the medical social consultant in her consultation is clearly evident—to help the director handle this difficult problem with full understanding of the underlying factors. Because this director was new in the field of public health, he raised some fundamental questions for which many others have struggled to find answers.

The consultant's skill in the use of the process is apparent. Because she had a good relationship with him, she was able to be more direct than might otherwise have been possible. The introduction into the consultation of the need to get more facts and evaluate their significance was in line with his natural scientific interest. The suggestion of some underlying ideas, such as the implications of authority and how these apply to social services, highlighted possible reasons for behavior and possible alternatives for action.

In such a brief description all the give and take of a relationship cannot be included. We do, however, sense that the consultant accepted the reality of the director's concern for this large public health problem. Starting with his questions, they moved together to deeper considerations. In this consultation there were definite steps in the process and there was purposefulness. The consultant brought to the problem her knowledge and understanding of people and of the patient with tuberculosis. Hopefully, some of her ideas might be used by the director in this situation and in others; the decision, of course, remained with him.

ADMINISTRATION, SUPERVISION, AND CONSULTATION

In another state, a newly appointed medical social worker in a crippled children's program in a state health department turned to a federal agency for consultation. She had spent two months in learning about the program, the clinics held, and the work of various professional personnel. During this period, she had learned something of the organization of health and welfare services in the state. She had discussed with the medical director of the program and with other staff members her ideas about ways of beginning her work in the state. She wished the help of the federal medical social consultant in testing her ideas.

Here we have an apparently well-qualified person seeking consultation from a person in the same discipline. She has explored her own situation, has made some tentative decisions, and sees the need for getting reactions and ideas and perhaps support from a person with wider experience before she moves forward.

The worker thought she might begin her duties by serving in the crippled children's clinics held in three communities adjacent to the state office, rather than attempting to attend all the clinics as her predecessor had done. These adjacent counties were fully staffed by health officers, public health nurses, and other personnel, most of whom were trained and who seemed to be interested in having her serve in the clinics. Was this a sound plan?

The consultant supported this idea; the interest of the county staffs in having help would be a most valuable asset. The accessibility of the counties, in addition, would mean that the social worker could visit the clinics regularly and assure a continuity of help. The consultant said that, in other states, experience had shown that some continuity and regularity in offering help were necessary if a relationship through which it could be given were to be attained and maintained. Had the worker thought about going into the counties a day or two before the clinics were to be held and staying on later in order to talk with the county health department staff as well as possibly with that of other agencies in the county? In other states this plan had been quite successful. It had provided workers with a way of becoming more intimately related to the counties and familiar with their resources, plans, and problems.

The social worker thought this plan could be carried out. She wondered also where she should put her emphasis in the clinics she would be attending. She had thought she would try to have children referred to her for social case-work service. Did the consultant think this was a good idea?

The consultant agreed that this was certainly an objective toward which to work. Perhaps she could begin by helping the various professional workers identify the kinds of cases they could refer to her. She might wish to indicate certain problem situations that might be referred routinely. Some medical social consultants had found this helpful.

After further discussion, the results of the conference were talked over with the medical director of the program who concurred with the general thinking.

CONSULTATION: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

He agreed that, at the next staff meeting, the worker would present her suggestions and secure the reactions of total staff.

This example shows a consultant assessing the needs of the person seeking consultation and meeting them clearly and consciously. During this process she gave the counselee her warm, helpful support to move ahead with some of her ideas reaffirmed and others expanded. She also gave her reassurance that the plan had been used to good effect in other states. On the surface, this approach may seem simple, but I believe it shows the consultative process used in a rich and productive way.

In this process, the federal consultant brought to bear her wider experience and perspective which had grown out of her opportunity to see other programs and her efforts to develop medical social services. Because a large part of her job was to help others with the medical social aspects of a program, she had had the opportunity, also, to think deeply as well as broadly.

In this instance the person asking consultation seemed fairly secure in her approach and her security was strengthened. She was left with responsibility for making decisions and for implementing ideas coming out of the discussion. The consultant did not try to take over nor to impose her own thinking. She recognized that the counselee knew her own situation best and would need to make her own adaptations.

Consultation on Individual Patients

Frequently the medical social worker gives consultation in regard to an individual patient. Although in this kind of consultation he works on a case, he is not doing casework. He is helping others who are working directly with the patient but is not directly involved with the patient.

In one hospital, a doctor on the staff told the director of the social service department that he was interested in learning about resources for a newborn hydrocephalic child, the grandchild of a patient of his; no medical treatment had been recommended, since the infant was completely helpless and was expected to live only three or four months.

Requests of this kind are familiar to many medical social workers. Essentially this was a request for consultation, for help the doctor wanted but would use or not use as he decided.

ADMINISTRATION, SUPERVISION, AND CONSULTATION

The medical social worker told the doctor there were few resources in the community for this kind of patient. She mentioned one public facility and the possibility of private boarding-home care for the child. The latter was frequently very expensive. Would the family be able to meet the costs?

The doctor stated that this was the first child of a young couple who had no financial resources, but the grandfather earned about \$600 a month and would be willing to assume some financial responsibility. The medical social worker gave the doctor the names of a few boarding homes approved by the State Welfare Department which would cost between \$100 and \$150 a month.

Because of her knowledge of what a baby with this condition might mean to the parents, the medical worker asked whether the parents were very upset about placing the baby. The doctor said that placement was the grandfather's idea, that he did not want his daughter-in-law or his son to have to face planning for the child. The grandfather planned to do it all.

The medical social worker expressed her understanding of the grandfather's feeling. However, she questioned whether the plan was really sound from his son's and daughter-in-law's point of view—or his own. The doctor said he realized that many people react with guilt and anxiety over having a child such as this. The medical social worker agreed and mentioned that some parents may want a child like this placed immediately; others may not be able to take this step. But was it not the parents themselves who should do the planning together, to work out their own feelings? The grandfather's taking over might arouse many feelings in the parents. The doctor could see this, and said he would like to talk over this point of view with the grandfather.

In this situation, the medical social worker met the request of the doctor directly, giving him the information he wanted. Because she was accustomed to thinking of the effect of any situation upon people, she raised the question about the parents' attitude. Her ability to follow the leads presented, to introduce knowledge out of her experience, to point out the possible meaning of "taking over," to suggest that, with all the pain in this situation, the child belonged to the parents and not to the grandfather, shows real skill.

Medical social workers in health department programs are often called upon for consultation to the public health nurse.

In one situation, a public health nurse came to see the state medical social consultant to talk about a patient. When this consultant first came to the health department, a plan for consultation interviews had been worked out. Ordinarily the nursing supervisor accompanied the nurse, but could not be present on this occasion. She had, however, advised the nurse to see the consultant.

Again in this situation we see a structure that facilitates consultation. The plan for the nursing supervisor to be present at consultation interviews also seems sound. If the supervisor is responsible for the on-going professional growth of the nurse, she should be aware of the various facets that may contribute to that growth.

The nurse stated that several members of the patient's family had had tuberculosis and the patient had been followed by the health department over a period of years because of her contacts with family members. The previous fall, the patient had had some positive cultures and hospitalization was recommended. This the patient had refused. Every mention of hospital care precipitated violent sobbing and the patient had said she could not face a long period away from home. She promised to stay in bed if she could stay at home. At that time, the doctor had approved a home plan on a trial basis.

The patient had kept her regimen at home very carefully; her recent X-ray at the clinic showed improvement and her cultures had all been negative. The doctor still thought hospitalization would be a better plan but agreed to home care because of the patient's strong feelings and the fact that she actually had done so well.

The nurse believed that the patient, who was now being allowed some "up time," was doing too much. But when she began to ask the patient about her activities, the patient immediately became defensive and gave a flat, unconvincing denial of overactivity. The nurse had not wanted to press the matter, knowing nothing could be gained in this way. But she was distressed because she feared a set-back in the patient's steady progress. She felt that their relationship had been good and that she had been able to help the patient in planning so far, but she did not know how to cope with this latest development.

In asking consultation, the nurse made it a clear request for help in meeting a very real problem. One could sense her warmth and interest in the patient and the help that she had been able to give.

The medical social consultant, wishing to get a clearer picture of what had operated in the past but was not so satisfactory in the new situation, asked who had helped the patient carry out her regimen. The patient's husband had assumed a great deal of responsibility with some limited assistance from other relatives. The medical social consultant suggested that the patient might be wondering how long he could continue to carry this heavy burden. Now that she was getting better, perhaps her continuing dependence on him worried her.

The nurse said that she was well aware of the problems convalescence presents. The medical social consultant suggested commenting to the patient that this was the hardest time of all, when she was beginning to feel well and make progress, but still had to hold back. This might lead to a realistic discussion about the importance of not losing the gains she had made.

The nurse thought this might help. Perhaps discussing convalescence in

ADMINISTRATION, SUPERVISION, AND CONSULTATION

this way would give her an opportunity to show her understanding of the patient's difficulties.

The nurse commented that probably she was closely identified with the patient. She felt that the patient had done a remarkable job so far in managing to rest. The consultant suggested that the nurse might tell the patient this in the course of the discussion. The nurse thought this would help. Perhaps if the patient knew how much respect the nurse really had for her, she would discuss the difficulties of this last and most difficult period more willingly. The nurse said she would drop in to see the patient soon. She planned to see her supervisor later in the day and would tell her about this discussion.

The purpose and focus of this consultation seem quite clear—to help the nurse in her supportive role to the patient. This example shows many of the elements of what I would consider good consultation: starting where the nurse is in her thinking and feeling, accepting and respecting her, helping her to use her own good ideas, but strengthening them. What the consultant was able to introduce here was the value of talking about the difficulties of convalescence with the patient and giving the patient recognition for what she had done to get well. From the consultant's knowledge of people and of ways of working with them in a casework relationship, she was able to introduce an approach and viewpoint that the nurse could use in her supportive function.

The brief discussion above does not give any information about the nurse's training or experience or about her supervisor's. Perhaps many factors brought out during consultation belong more appropriately to the basic training and experience of nurses or to help from their supervisors. This example shows, however, the kind of help growing out of social work training and experience which can be a characteristic medical social contribution in consultation to adequately trained and competent nurses.

Perhaps this discussion on consultation to individual patients should be ended with a word of warning. When facts are not clear, when the basis for making a valid judgment is inadequate, the consultant may need to see the patient in order to arrive at a diagnosis upon which to make sound suggestions. It is always better to acknowledge one's own limitations in giving help when the actual situation is unclear. Although it may be necessary for the consultant to see the patient in some instances, the consultant does not carry on-going responsibility for him.

I realize that in all these examples the consultant and the person seeking consultation have been secure, interested people who feel as they should when they should, who think as we should like to have them think, and who do the right thing at the right time. Life, of course, is not like this, but I prefer to use these good examples for illustrative purposes.

We all, however, can point to examples of the consultant who does not take enough time to listen, who may be so dedicated to advancing her own point of view that she does not hear even if she does listen, and who, with the best will in the world, may have too limited knowledge and understanding to be helpful. Similarly, we know persons who go through the motions of asking for help but show their resistance through their general attitude and the kinds of questions they ask, who have such deep feelings about a situation that they can accept help only slowly and over a long period of time, who seem to be participating in the consultation and taking help but avoid doing anything in line with the suggestions offered. Some of these situations cannot be handled; many others can be dealt with if the consultant is sufficiently aware of himself as well as of the person seeking consultation and makes skilful use of the consultation process.

What Consultation Is Not

These examples of consultation on program and on individual patients illustrate many of the points of our theoretical discussion. Perhaps now we should look briefly at what consultation is not.

In some instances the medical social consultant's participation in a meeting called within a health or medical care agency by the program director or hospital director has been described as "giving consultation." In my opinion this is not consultation. In this situation a consultant is *doing directly with others*; he is participating actively, not giving consultation.

Others have considered that a medical social worker or any social worker is giving consultation when he contributes to the discussion of unmet needs in a community group. Again, if he is working jointly with others, he is participating in a community organization process, not giving consultation.

Some have believed that when two people are discussing a situa-

tion with which both are working, one is giving consultation to the other. In my opinion, if there is direct activity with the client on the part of both, this is "co-operative work," not consultation.

Supervision is not consultation—because in supervision there is a direct-line responsibility. The supervisor is responsible for seeing that the job is done, for judging the quality of the job, for holding the person accountable. In the final analysis, the supervisor carries some responsibility for the total professional growth of the individual worker.

Consultation, on the other hand, gives help with a specific aspect of a person's performance rather than with the total performance. The consultant, as a specialist, is expected to have broad knowledge and understanding of a specific area, and to use these in helping the person asking consultation. Consultation is help given without authority for insisting that it be taken. Essentially the consultation depends on the value of the ideas, rather than on the authority inherent in administrative lines.

Certain similarities exist between consultation and supervision. Both occur within the agency setting; both operate through a relationship; both put responsibility on others to *do* the work.

These differences and similarities are significant and suggest the importance of the consultant's working with the supervisor. Only through a good working relationship can the supervisor feel free to permit the use of the consultant. Sometimes consultation may need to be given to the supervisor and he should be present at most conferences. Under all conditions, means must be found to share with the supervisor the content of consultation conferences.

An Overview of the Process

We have been discussing consultation as practiced by the social worker and more specifically by the medical social worker. The content of the consultation is, of course, what the social worker through his training and experience has learned and practiced which may be of help to another person on his job. The specifics of this content have been illustrated in the various examples—how policy can include consideration of social factors, how social services can be initiated and developed, how understanding of the individual in his social relationships can be used to help him regain

health and adjustment. But it is not by knowledge alone that the consultant helps. The attitudes and the set of values that the consultant brings to consultation are of vital importance, too.

The skills used in giving consultation are inherent in establishing and maintaining a good relationship with another person. All professions practice consultation and these skills are present in consultation given by other professional personnel. Perhaps social workers have defined some of these skills more clearly than other groups and have used some of their basic knowledge and understanding more consciously in developing the personal relationship involved in the consultation process. It may well be that consultation by the social worker takes on certain characteristics of a social work activity not only in content but in skill.

In this discussion we have tried to interweave various guiding principles in consultation. Perhaps at this time we should highlight them. To be effective, consultation:

1. Should be accepted by the total agency as appropriate and as having a place in its program. This means that a structure is set up to facilitate consultation, administrative support and sanction are given to it, and its possibilities and limitations are recognized.
2. Must be seen as help given to others working directly with people or situations. This concept must be clear if consultation is to be clearly differentiated from other processes.
3. Demands a mutual understanding of and respect for the contribution and responsibility of the consultant and the person who consults him.
4. Should start where the counselee is, with the consultant giving him real acceptance and support, and truly recognizing his strengths.
5. Should move from the specific to the general, from implications in the immediate situation to those in other situations.

What is it in the background and knowledge of the consultant and in his personal qualities which determine what he is able to give in consultation?

Medical social consultants work with a variety of people: those in their own field, those in other aspects of social work, those in other fields. To be helpful to all these groups the medical social consultant must first of all have the sturdy base of competence in his own specialty. When giving consultation to medical social

workers he must give them deeper knowledge, wider experience, more perspective, and a broader view. When giving consultation to other social workers, he must contribute his special knowledge and understanding of the meaning of illness and health measures and of how social workers can use these in their help to individuals and communities. When giving consultation to people in other fields, he must be able to translate his own specialized knowledge in such a way that it has meaning and usefulness to the other person.

Like all social workers, the consultant must be sensitive to other people, must be able to listen to and understand them. In addition he must have special qualities; he must be flexible in approach, secure enough to recognize his own limitations, capable of thinking in long-range terms, mature in judgment, capable of accepting and working with slow accomplishment, and able to leave another person free to move ahead at his own rate.

The giving of consultation is, of course, an enriching process for the consultant and he learns from every such experience. Each person whom he helps adds to his store of knowledge, deepens his understanding, and, in the long run, makes him a better consultant. These principles and qualities are not fixed points in the consultant's horizon. Rather they represent objectives toward which he is reaching, goals toward which he is striving. Every consultation marks hard-won growth toward maturity in the consultation process.

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